

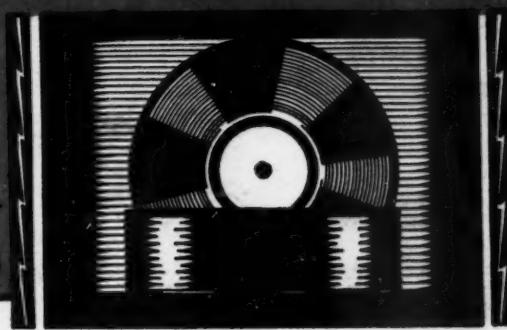
OCTOBER, 1936

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The  
**AMERICAN  
MUSIC LOVER**

RECORDS

RADIO



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EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED

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# The American Music Lover

A REVIEW FOR THE MODERN HOME

OCTOBER  
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## EDITORIAL

THE record buyer of today is not as keenly interested in vocal recordings as he was ten years ago. The reason is comprehensible. Ten years ago, the only recordings which approached any true degree of actuality were those made by vocalists. Among instrumental recordings, only the solo violin emerged as approximately the real thing, but even these recordings were much like out-of-focus photographs. The distortion was not, however, as great as it was in the case of the piano, the cello, or a group of instruments. All of which explains the importance the record collector attaches to the vocal records of yesterday, for in them, no doubt, he figures that he has to a goodly degree a worthwhile facsimile of the artistry of some of the great singers of another era.

The lack of interest in vocal music today is not, however, justified. Every record buyer, who is adding monthly to his library, should consider some vocal recordings in part. Perhaps, he may not care to play them as often as he does certain instrumental recordings, but the intimate type of pleasure he can and will derive from the vocalist upon occasion is not to be minimized. A true appreciation of music is only developed through variety. Those who limit themselves to symphonic music or chamber music, and who fail to procure some of the better examples of the vocalist's art — such as an album of Hugo Wolf's songs, a group of Schubert's or Brahms' or Richard Strauss' songs — are assuredly cutting off their own nose to spite their face. That is if they profess to have a catholicity of taste, which is after all essential to a real appreciation of any art. Preferences are comprehensible, but one limits themselves greatly and becomes quickly surfeited when they feast only on them.

(Continued on Page 185)

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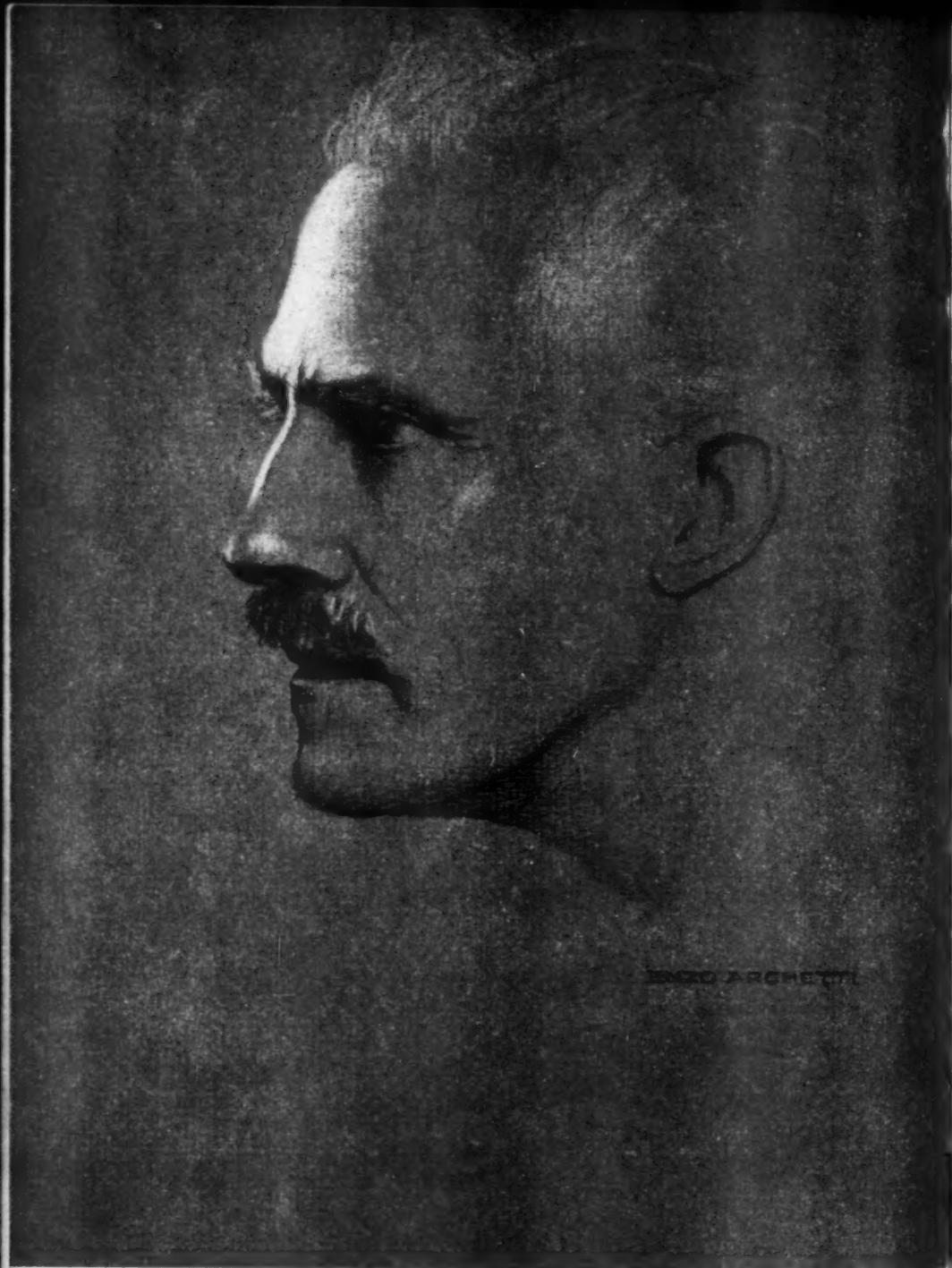
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EMICO ARCHETTI

**ARTURO TOSCANINI . . . . .**

**Who Conducts Beethoven's Seventh Symphony  
in a new recording.**

# Some Thoughts Inspired By Jazz\*

By PETER HUGH REED

THE novelist, Compton Mackenzie, who — as editor of *The Gramophone* — has frequently given us some startling exhortations upon music, in the September issue of this magazine, suggests an interesting hypothesis of why people like jazz.

"Jazz is a surrender," he avers, "paradoxically a tired surrender, of the mind to the body."

This is a most provocative postulation. I am not certain but Mr. Mackenzie has hit the nail upon the head. One's growth into music requires a denial in part of the body, just as one's growth in life requires the same thing. Figuratively speaking, to reach the stars one cannot wing their way emotionally, but only through mental growth. To listen to music that simply pleases the senses endlessly is to become quickly surfeited. Of course, such music as jazz can be used for stimulation and probably is by a good many people. It acts upon them like a drink of whiskey or gin. That it is equally harmful, there is no doubt in my mind, the difference being the one plays havoc with the organs while the other does it with the nerves.

Mr. Mackenzie thinks that "jazz represents a passing phase in humanity's development, but it may easily be a long phase." This is an interesting contention. There will be those who will scoff, and immediately place their finger on the latter part of the sentence, and proclaim that Mr. Mackenzie plays safe by putting it this way. But is he playing safe? As a matter of fact, who among us can predict how long a phase in the development of mankind is going to last? We might like to deem it transitory, but common sense teaches us that these phases of the multitudes are not shortlived. Jazz is most assuredly a development of a phase, but it is by no means a

new one. It emanates from the desire of mankind to express themselves in dance, which is most assuredly a surrender "of the mind to the body." Not that dancing at its finest is not governed by the mind, but in the case of public dancing (or should I say ballroom dancing) the mind has certainly become a secondary thing in recent years. And strangely enough, we admire dancers most who abandon themselves to the music, who in their bodily postures express the rhythm and the energy of the music devoid of mental government. In other words, the thing must be second nature, a purely uninhibited emotional response. Patterns in the dance may be traced, but if these are the concern of the dancers we no longer admire their performance. No — dancing is essentially a surrender of the mind to the body, but that does not mean that it has got to be unnecessarily primitive or sexy.

This seems to be getting slightly off the subject of my article — which is jazz. But then, jazz is the dominating principle of ballroom dancing today. It has our young people definitely in its sway (I wanted to say clutches, but I felt I might be getting unnecessarily dramatic, since it is not a figurative villain), and it undoubtedly permits them to get rid of a lot of surplus energy. Surely, that in itself is healthy. The rub, however, with musical people is the fact that jazz is exploited and admitted as *music*. Those who don't like it would like to have it classified as something else. What they would classify it as, however, I have never been able to ascertain. Perhaps some readers can enlighten me.

We receive a lot of correspondence informing us that we devote too much space to jazz. And we receive considerable correspondence congratulating us on our observation of same and likewise our estimations of it. Personally I am not a jazz enthusiast, but that does not preclude my appreciation of certain developments in the so-called Jazz idiom.

\*This exposition was provoked by the stimulating editorial by Compton Mackenzie in the September issue of *The Gramophone*.

"What do you think of jazz?" This question is hurled at me again and again.

Usually I respond with a compromise.

"It is a reflection of the times —" or "it has its place in the scheme of things."

Generalizations — you may say. But then — why not generalize? After all, one cannot be arguing music all the time with everybody; and, after all, people *have* a right to their own tastes. Too, the people that ask me this question are usually prompted by no special motive, other than making idle conversation. If I answered them more specifically — or if I asked them the same question — they would most probably be at a loss how to continue the conversation or to respond to the question.

What I should say in answer to this question is:

"I don't think." Meaning I do not think about jazz; because I do not receive any special stimulation from it nor get any especial pleasure out of listening to it.

That's it. Jazz does not puzzle me, it does not provide any food for thought, it does not lift me emotionally or spiritually, in fact it leaves me quite cold. So-called *hot* jazz fails to engender any heat. Frequently it intrigues me with its rhythmic patterns, its ingenious instrumentation. I admire the musicianship of many of its exponents, but I recognize at the same time that much merit is being thrown overboard for the sake of exhibitionism. The average life, or should I say popularity, of a jazz player is relatively short. I will not go into any reasons for this, for quite honestly I have not given it any thought. But I would be interested to have someone else who is more familiar with the facts of the case present them to me and to my readers.

Jazz with me serves a definite purpose, however. In other words — "it has its place." For when I want to dance — it's jazz I want to hear and *good* jazz, *vital* jazz: jazz with plenty of rhythm and energy. In other words, I like it "hot". It's got to be emotionally compelling with me, for I hate like anything to think of my feet when I dance. Hence I am in agreement with Mr. Mackenzie's hypothesis, for I surrender unconditionally "my mind to my body." And why should not one do this? After all, why should we not succumb in part or upon occasion to our fundamental animal and primitive heritage which

lies back of the thin veneer of civilized life? All dances have been an escape from the rigidities of the various manifestations of life which various cultures have imposed upon mankind at different periods and places.

As for listening to jazz, and enjoying it — well, very little can catch, much less *hold* my attention. There are exceptions. But they are few and far between. I like my music better ordered. In other words, I've attuned my whole being to the recognized great masters of music and their so-called classical expressions.

Listening to jazz is analogous to listening to synthetic conversationalists. The art of conversation is to most people a lost one. So 'tis said! But this is not true. It is with the many something they have never approached or considered seriously. It's like reading cheap literature. A lot of people do this because it whiles away time, entertains them for the moment, stimulates them emotionally. That it is emotionally superficial they do not recognize because they just naturally "surrender their minds to their bodies." But this is not a criticism. After all, it takes all kinds to make a world, and if we were all interested in the same things and in the same way, the world would be a dreadfully dull and monotonous place to live in. Perhaps, those of us who admire the best in music and in art are no better off. In culture one finds much dissatisfaction and many heartaches. If people are happy in one state of mind why try to transmit them to another state!

And, if we concede Mr. Mackenzie being right in his assertion that "jazz represents a passing phase in humanity's development" we have another argument to face. This suggests that we'll all rise above it someday, or should I say outgrow it. I can imagine how this thought will appeal to the devotees of jazz, who most probably would not concede that it is a phase with them or for that matter with humanity.

Mr. Mackenzie states further that "we are apt to think of jazz as a post-war product, and no doubt in its typical form that is true." This assertion I have heard said so often, but I am inclined to disagree with it, even as he does later on in his copy. This is a clear-cut fallacy, as any historical investigation will prove. It is a definite reflection, in my way of thinking, of the restlessness, the machine-driven spirit of the age. It has grown along with the times, with the momentum of modern living. Mr. Mackenzie goes on to point

out that "it was obvious to anybody who visited New York two years before the war that Negro music was going to catch hold of the whites, and (for this reason) it would be a mistake to attribute its popularity to the devitalization caused by the war. Indeed the war provides too facile an explanation for many contemporary tendencies. The war merely speeded up the development of a state of mind discernible at the beginning of the century. In fact the war itself was a form of jazz, and the disquieting ease with which common opinion is beginning to find another war inevitable is reflected in this Swing music of the moment."

I want to thank Mr. Mackenzie for his observations, his courage and his daring in putting them into words. I am inclined to admit most of his logic as sound, and his contentions well taken. But I must disagree on one point, that regarding New York two years prior to the war. Why not go back to the opening of the century, to Paris and the Negro influence that was in evidence there, as well as here, at that time? The *cakewalk*, the *strut*, certainly took people's imagination, and influenced not only the multitudes but some serious composers also — Debussy included. Out of these early manifestations of bodily contortions, a variety of dances were formed that became popular in the ballroom. People criticized them more before the war, it will be admitted, but that did not preclude their indulgence or participation in them. Our so-called people of culture found it a "lark" to participate, the while they criticized on the side. That they really enjoyed the freedom of a new variety of exhibitionism was not admitted, and I daresay not even mentally conceded. But just as people have naturally taken to wine from the beginning of time, so they have naturally taken to stimulating dances.

Complete dissatisfaction with jazz is of course personal to some people. I find it hard to agree, however, with Mr. Mackenzie, who apparently dislikes it intensely, when he states that he finds jazz "when it is out of its element as it certainly is in this country (meaning England), itself one of the most conspicuous affectations of civilization." At the same time, I heartily agree with him that Mr. Leonard Hibbs, the editor of *Swing Music*, is out of alignment when he states that "jazz" offers an escape from the affectations of civilization." Are the well-ordered foundations of civilization out of order? Are recognized table manners, to use a common

simile, out of order? Hardly! Jazz is neither an escape from civilization nor one of its "conspicuous affectations." Swing Music, as a matter of fact, is developing as many cliches and affectations as any manifestation of civilized life that one could select. It is, in truth, an order of things offering primarily what Mr. Mackenzie says pertinently, but does not stress, "a surrender," and let us quote his full sentence, "paradoxically a tired surrender, of the mind to the body."

The finale of Mr. Mackenzie's editorial on jazz shows an unbelievable intolerance, but again I cannot help but admire his courage and his daring. It is worth passing on to



MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE

my readers, for among them there are probably many who no doubt should be similarly "overwhelmed with compassion." After listening to the new performance of Schubert's *Trout Quintet*, by Schnabel, the Pro Art group and Hobday, the Editor of *The Gramophone* confesses he "was suddenly overwhelmed with compassion for these young people with their Rhythm clubs and Swing Music societies, these poor young people trying pathetically and so earnestly to build a little world of their own from which they can defy Sophocles and Dante and Beethoven and Leonardo with their funny little nigger noises, listening to which like

(Continued on Page 168)

# Musical Japan

By CLAUDE LAPHAM

IT is a human tendency to speak disparagingly of any subject that one does not understand. This tendency is over-developed on the subject of music, in which there exist violently bitter contrasting schools and credos. This controversial attitude is ever-present in Occidental music, but the subject of Oriental music is dismissed by almost all Occidentals with a shrug of the shoulders. It is deemed too cacophonous, discordant, conflicting and primitive; and those composers who venture timidly into the Oriental musical forests do so with their tongues in their cheeks and with nothing but the vaguest superficial knowledge of their subject-matter. In fact, the same characteristics are used by them all, irrespective of the country or locale involved, whether Japan, China, Java or Arabia. The "inspired" composer has only to employ the minor mode; open fifths played repeatedly in the bass a la "Tam Tam" and the whole tone scale in order to depict an Oriental scene; but the debacle of such pseudo-description is the fact that the composer must tell in his title just where the locale is laid. The Japanese public for years has been accustomed to these types of music, and can properly label them as imitations of Chinese, Siamese music, etc., even though the titles are of Japanese scenes.

Japanese music is definitely different. It is original and inspiring. However, it is subtle, mystic and not easily absorbed even by the trained musician. It well repays, however, the time and effort of the initiated. Perhaps a few words about Japan's musical background might not be amiss.

"Mukashi mukashi" — ages and ages ago — when gods peopled Japan, one of them, Susa-no-o, came to visit his sister, Ama-Terasu, who was the Goddess of Light, Music and Dance, and who controlled night and day. Susa-no-o was very wicked, and one day frightened his sister so greatly that she hid in a deep cavern. Thereupon, the world was plunged into darkness. Eighty myriads of Gods assembled before her cave, imploring her to return, but she heeded them not. Finally the Gods made plans to reassure her.

Singing birds were brought. Multitudes of stars were fashioned together into a resplendent mirror. Dazzling jewels were mounted with fastidious care. Musical instrument were created. Six long-bows were bound together and the strings gently plucked. This was the first "Koto." The beauteous Ame-no-Uzume came to dance and sing. And when the opportune moment arrived, a paean of the music of Nature poured forth, the while Ame-no-Uzume (Girl who makes Heaven envious) danced and sang. The billions of Gods present were so enraptured that they joined in the hilarious proceedings. Ama-Terasu was curious and coming from her cave, was quickly persuaded to join the happy throng. Ama-Tsumura, the blacksmith, placed a magical mirror before the cave entrance and so Ama-Terasu has remained on Earth ever since. This is the fabulous beginning of Japanese music, but the historical side is just as charming.

In 200 A. D. occurred the first Japanese conquest of Corea, and the Court and people of Japan first heard foreign music. All musical instruments of Japan are of foreign origin, except the Yamato Koto and Flute. Empress Jingo of this period demanded as one of the tributes, the presence of Korean musicians in the Imperial Court. This early interest of the Court developed with each succeeding monarch. In 453 A. D. the King of Shiragi (Corea) presented eighty Corean musicians to the Japanese Court, and under their instruction, a group of young talented Japanese were carefully selected to learn the intricacies of the art of foreign music.

In the course of time, these styles were blended with native Japanese styles. By 700 A. D. Chinese music was very popular, and due to the approval of the Court, it was considered "haut monde" to be well versed in this foreign music. The Emperor Mommu established a Bureau of Music with five hundred members. This Bureau was subsidized under succeeding emperors, as well as a music school of pure Japanese music, and an orchestra of female musicians, dancers and singers. These three contrasting types of

musical endeavor flourished for many hundreds of years, attesting to the early love of music evidenced by the ancient courts of Japan.

A modern survival of this love for music may be seen in the Imperial Court Orchestra for the present Mikado. This numbers fifty musicians, and is conducted by an Italian opera coach. They play solely for the edification of the court.

The Chinese and Indian scales are founded on a system of quarter-tones, which are almost impossible to transcribe, but the Japanese tonality is entirely original and different from other Asiatic scales. It is analogous to our own European system, except in the fact of being pentatonic. The sub-dominant and leading tone are omitted, adding a piquant flavor to the music. The black keys on the piano are the same as the Japanese scale in the major mode, but the Japanese public much prefer the minor mode. The Scottish and Hebraic tonalities are very similar. Note: *Auld Lang Syne* is written in the pentatonic scale.

Harmony is as yet not well understood in Japan, and we must remember that even in Europe, harmony is a comparatively new development. The Japanese still think in terms of the unison or contrapuntally. The *National Anthem* was recorded some years ago, harmonized in European style, but public aversion forced its withdrawal. The leading-tone often becomes a whole step, but never is used as a half-step.

Japan is, as I have stated previously in an article, the record Paradise of the whole world, buying more in proportion than any other two countries. In fact, more Beethoven symphonies were sold in 1934 than in all of Europe combined. The Japanese are deep and sincere students of the European forms of music, like the symphony, concerto and sonata; and all homes of the highest classes possess an extensive repertoire of standard symphonic and chamber music. They especially enthuse over string music. Strange to say, the popularity of foreign recordings is arranged thusly — French, German, English and American. They are also very fond of different sounds produced by wood, as well as many types of bells and drums. I wandered into a teashop one day and found to my surprise over a hundred records of standard symphonic works, with not a single record of jazz.

There are ten record companies, some of them operating night and day; and all of them very prosperous. As there is but little demand for printed music, the record industry has control of the modern music of Japan, a sad condition, as commercial motives almost always submerge the artistic. Our own craze for the popular song of the moment also exists in Japan, as exemplified by a "hit" of Koga's, called *Sake (Wine) Brings Tears*, and the most successful of them all, Nakayama's *Tokyo Ondo*, which is a modern version of an ancient song and dance. This showed some one hundred thousand dollars in profits and has been followed by "Ondos" of every type, akin to our own "Blues." I studied Japanese music very assiduously, and



Mr. Lapham in Native Costume

one day, ordered a record of every type of Japanese classical native song. The record shop, to my great surprise, sent me forty-four different records.

The serious Japanese composer absorbs a great deal of the technical knowledge of European musical literature to the detriment of his own native idiom, and I have found many sonatas, etc., by Japanese, all of them cleverly done, but similar to the styles of Mozart, Beethoven, etc. I personally disliked this, and sought to blend the Japanese and European styles, preserving at least three quarters of the native coloring and using only enough of the foreign type to leaven

the whole and make a well-rounded composition in European form.

One day, a youthful Japanese composer brought me his latest work — most of which was derived from Schubert's *Serenade*, but in the Japanese tonality. I solemnly assured him that composers turn over in their graves when their works are plagiarized. He took me very seriously, and no doubt, believed it, as he never returned. Another time, I was quite intrigued by hearing an errand boy on a bicycle gaily whistling Ravel's *Bolero* in the Japanese scale. I, too, composed Japanese songs, but for months, I was unable to "hear" their scale, so perforce, I composed in our own tonality and then extracted the notes superfluous to the scale.

The Japanese individual is the most polite in the world. This I had climaxed one day by a remarkable happening. A pianist had apparently made some mistake during a recording, because he suddenly stopped playing, and arising, bowed very low — in the middle of the record!

Our own Stephen Foster songs are very popular in Japan, appearing in sheet music form with the weirdest interpretations of Southern characters, often in Alpine costumes playing a concertina. Of late, our "hill-billies" have also become very popular, to say nothing of *Sidewalks of New York*; College Songs; and Hawaiian Songs. The records generally consist of a Japanese chorus, an orchestral chorus, and an English chorus. Verses are never used. There are no modulations nor special effects, and most certainly, no "hot" nor "swing" choruses, as the public is convinced that the player is making mistakes and has forgotten the melody when he plays "hot". No doubt, that opinion is not far from being correct.

Jazz is slowly but surely taking hold. Records of high, shrill, strident clarinet and hot violin solos are the most popular, as they seem to tickle the Oriental musical palate. The Columbia Record Company has its own staff jazz band, which is kept busy, and plays remarkably well. I was imported (from China of all places) to coach and conduct this band, as well as to be head of the music department. The drummer was frantically studying harmony, much to my surprise, and I found them all young, ambitious, and of nice appearance. Another famous band is that of Kyosuke Kami, musical director of the P. C. L. picture studio. He is called the "Paul Whiteman of Japan," as once each

month, he gives concerts in the largest auditoriums, attended by hundreds of people.

Then there are concerts of nothing but Hawaiian music, mostly of rhythmical instrumental music, interspersed with dances and songs, but withal, very interesting and entertaining; an idea that America could well adopt with success.

Also there are harmonica concerts, where the orchestra numbered some forty members and each harmonica was constructed with the closest approximate tone of the Oboe, Trombone, and others. Their repertoire consisted of a classical division, comprising the *London Symphony* of Haydn, and *Damnation of Faust* by Berlioz; followed by a modern jazz division — all performed seriously with a conductor in formal evening attire. A similar concert of a single harmonica soloist recently excited London as an innovation, but the Japanese conceived this program and presented it long ago.

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### SOME THOUGHTS INSPIRED

(Continued from Page 165)

children they play at being Zulus, wriggling and strutting and slithering across the floors of night clubs as not so long ago with kelted nightgowns they toddled fiercely over the floors of their night nurseries. And I suppose these synthetic Lobengulas would call the *Trout Quintet* an affectation of civilization."

Mr. Mackenzie seems to be somewhat vitriolic in his hatred of jazz, and in my opinion, needlessly concerned about civilization. I don't think that jazz will destroy civilization's foundation, nor knock over the pillars which support its roof. I know many jazz enthusiasts who are familiar with Sophocles and Dante and Beethoven and Leonardo and who appreciate them, but whose tastes are sufficiently catholic, shall we say, to enjoy — or derive pleasure from — more than one expression of culture.

I'm inclined to think that Mr. Mackenzie failed to make the most out of his hypothesis, which I particularly like — "Jazz is a surrender, paradoxically a tired surrender, of the mind to the body." Maybe some of my readers agree, and maybe others have completely different ideas. It would be interesting to hear them expressed.

I've forgotten to mention that the Editor of *The Gramophone*, in that part of his editorial in the September issue dealing with jazz, was prompted so to write by the inability of Swing Music enthusiasts to give a definition of Swing.

# Well-Springs of Lieder

By ARTHUR WILLIAM WOLF

"—kennst Du die eignen Lieder nicht?"

—Mueller

**D**OUBTLESS, the most universally popular and most readily accepted form of musical expression is song, and the highest development of this branch of the art is the *Kunstlied*. The great Teutonic composers, almost without exception, since Mozart first planted the germinating seed have used this form of tonal utterance; some have been totally unsuccessful, while others have realized their most lofty conceptions through this medium.

Song probably antedates recorded history, and it is reasonable to suppose that it first came into existence when some primitive man, groping along evolutionary peregrination, strung together certain sounds of the primeval jungle, thus bringing into being a new means of instinctive expression. In almost every savage tribe since prehistoric times songs have existed.

Ancient Greece had its songs, for its poets were also its musicians; and when Rome appropriated the Greek arts the ancient modes and scales were ultimately transmitted to the early Christian hymn writers, who were also influenced greatly by the hymnology of the Hebrews.

In those early times music was entirely *melodic*, harmony being as yet unknown. During the latter part of the tenth century the Flemish theorist, Hucbald, introduced a system known as the *Organum* in which singers could sing together in fourths and fifths. Then came Guido of Arezzo who inaugurated oblique motion, and the early English writers who by use of contrary motion shortly before the beginning of the Twelfth Century opened the field for vocal counterpoint which was to play such an important part in vocal music for the next five hundred years.

From thence we trace the development of song to the Italian Monteverde who enhanced the operatic solo with such hitherto unknown dramatic force. Examples of Monteverde's music are not too plentiful on records, but several are extant. The best and most accessible of these is his *Madrigal-Sestina, Tears of a Lover at the Tomb of the*

*Beloved*, which has the additional interest of a comprehensive story on the music by Mr. Reed, the editor of this magazine.

From Monteverde, we go on to Scarlatti, Lully and the English Tudor or Restoration composer Henry Purcell. Lully has been recorded fairly extensively in France, and some of his best operatic selections are to be found on records. Scarlatti (I refer to Allesandro) is represented by several songs on records, but perhaps most auspiciously by his *Sonata* for flute and strings (Victor discs 4250-51). Purcell has recently been splendidly represented by a group of recordings, put out by the *English Music Society*, and by a complete recording of his opera *Dido and Aeneas* (the latter unfortunately poorly sung).

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart brought the world the intimation of the glorious flood of *Kunstlieder* which was to follow. Strange to say, Mozart's lieder have not been extensively recorded. Among his Italian songs, for example, only his *Ridente la calma* has been recorded, and that in an acoustic version by John McCormack. *Das Veilchen*, one of his loveliest lieder, still needs the perfect interpretation in the original German. The best recorded examples of his *lieder* are unquestionably those made by Lotte Lehmann, despite their weak piano background, *An Chloe* and *Die Verschweigung* (Victor disc 1730).

Mozart was magnificent in his quiet simplicity, and while the lied in process of time, was developed to the sublimest heights by such geniuses as Schubert, Wolf and Brahms, few if any ever approached his grand unaffectedness of style, that unexemplified *simplex munditis*, as it were. Mozart's contemporary, Johann Abraham Peter Schultz accomplished a great deal in development of the *lied*. In his songs we find much that influenced later composers. Schultz was really the first song composer to make the accompaniment a vital part of the song. Only one of his lieder has been recorded — *Der Mond ist auf gegangen* (Kantorei disc No. 33). Thus the *Kunstlied* was evolving rapidly from the *Volkslieder* and the metamorphosis

attracted more and more of those who spoke in the language of tone. Karl Friedrich Zelter, Mendelssohn's teacher, was a lieder composer of that period and his settings of Goethe's poems were much admired by the poet.

The musical "all father" Johann Sebastian Bach, so far as we can learn, wrote only a very few individual songs and this is true of his mighty Saxon contemporary, George Frederic Handel. *Bist du bei mir* from Anna Magdalena Bach's Notebook is an excellent example from Bach, and can be had on a Victor record sung by Elisabeth Schumann. Only one of Handel's independent songs is to be found on records, *Suesse still*, sung by the celebrated Dutch soprano Mme. Noorderweir-Reddingius (Columbia disc DHX 37). Gluck's contribution to song literature is confined to some settings of Klopstock's *Odes*. They are negligible except from a purely historical standpoint. Haydn wrote simply and gracefully for the voice, but Haydn was a pioneer in the instrumental field and his song compositions were merely accessories.

Beethoven enlarged the domain of the lieder, but he was not essentially a composer for the voice. As a fact, he treated the voice harshly, and while his songs are sufficiently dramatic they are wanting in lyric mastery. Lotte Lehmann has given us two examples of his song-writing — *Freudvoll und Leidvoll* and *Die Trommel geruehret*, both from incidental music composed for Goethe's *Egmont* (Odeon disc 4835).

### Next Came Schubert!

The lieder of Carl Maria von Weber while forcefully dramatic are extremely folksy in character. Next came Schubert! To dwell here on the accomplishments of this supreme master of song would indeed be superfluous. Suffice it to say that more than any other he infused the lied with the supreme spirit of genius and made it a sublime expression of noble thought. Today his songs are as fresh as uncut flowers; they still plumb the depths and reach to the sky. There are a great many fine recordings of Schubert's lieder, for almost every eminent singer of songs, who has recorded extensively, has contributed to this collection. Some of these have been exploited more than others. Two discs, which have missed exploitation however, but are deserving of special notice, were made by Heinrich Rehkemper, the German baritone. They contain fine contrasting material — *Am Bach*

*der Fruhling* and *Sei mir gegruesst* (Polydor 95103), and *Der Doppelgaenger* and *Abchied* (Polydor 95102). The late Herman Klein, one of the most noted vocal critics of his time, praised these discs highly and classified Rehkemper's singing of *Der Doppelgaenger* as one of the finest he had ever heard. One can recommend many Schubert songs, but the list would be too long and quite out of place here.

Schubert was fortunate in his brief span of life to be surrounded by poets of talent, and Schubert was — as a rule — most solicitous in regard to his selection of texts. He invariably chose the works of great poets, such as Goethe, whose sentiment and philosophy would not shrink when exposed to penetrating intellect. Probably Schubert's songs have withstood the rigors of time because he never accepted all that his poet said, for there are no excesses, no redundancy, no preserving of those ephemeral fashions, which have been fatal to many of Robert Franz' songs. No — Schubert's songs were no lyrical dust-catches, for they never reek of the oil lamp.

Mendelssohn contributed graceful and melodic songs to the great field of lieder, but at best they are only tuneful entertainment, dignified — yes, but not significant.

### Great Emotional Depth

Robert Schumann, on the other hand, reveals in his songs a great emotional depth. He did not possess the command of varied styles as did Schubert but none surpassed him, and indeed few rivalled him in warmth of feeling. There are many of Schumann's songs on records. Choice of this material can be largely governed by personal preference. The writer feels, however, that those recordings made by Lotte Lehmann, Ria Ginster, and Heinrich Schlusnus are most to be desired, because vocally they are better endowed to present the true "warmth of feeling" in Schumann's essentially romantic songs.

Robert Franz was undoubtedly one of the greatest geniuses among musicians, and his charming songs have been neglected undeservedly. It is true that many times he expended his genius upon poetic situations which were not to outlive their period, but casting aside those songs that are admittedly antiquated, there is much in Franz's lieder that is beautiful and significant. Their delicacy requires perhaps, that they be sung in a chamber hall rather than a large concert hall, yet their charm is undeniable. For this reason, they are particularly suited to re-

cording. When sung by an artist of real ability these songs reach those innermost recesses of the soul which can be found only by the light of the ignited spark of genius. Franz, until recently, was badly neglected on records. Ernst Wolff, the German baritone, however, has rectified that condition with his album of twenty-four songs. Wolff is unfortunately a greater musician than a vocalist (he is unique in the fact that he accompanies himself at the keyboard), his emotional range being limited and his interpretive artistry lacking in variety. Nor does he always succeed in attaining the requisite climax of the songs. Yet this album is well worth owning, for he understands the spirit of these songs and he is — as I have said — a fine musician.

The songs of Franz Liszt appear on programs all too seldom. There may be a justifiable basis for the neglect of much of his instrumental output, but this certainly cannot be said — in my estimation — of his *Lieder*. They rightfully belong side by side with some of the noblest utterances of their kind in music.

### Liszt An Innovator

Liszt opened up entirely new perspectives in song composition and added a dramatic element hitherto unknown. He introduced innovations in the accompaniment principle among which is the short, pregnant motif and the transformation of these motifs to express changing moods. Liszt followed his text with absolute fidelity, and he dramatized and illustrated every detail with uncanny accuracy. Take for example songs like *Die drei Zigeuner* and *O komm im Traum* (the latter originally written to the French poem of Victor Hugo), which Theodor Scheidl, the German baritone, sings on a Polydor disc (No. 27203), in the first song Liszt is concerned with characterizing three gypsies — one who fiddled, one who smoked and the other who slept when "life was filled with sadness" — and in the second with the tender emotions of a lover who would have his beloved appear to him in a dream "like Laura came to Petrach in days of old." Take also a song like Liszt's *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein*, one of the most admired of the composer's *Lieder*, here the music sustains the poetic depth in the simplest and yet the most expressive manner. These are great songs.

There are some who contend that Liszt cannot be considered in the same class as Schubert, Schumann, Wolf and Brahms, but those who opine thus are usually unfamiliar with

his songs or else are ever ready to condemn him because of the superficial banalities found in his instrumental compositions. They have never, of course, enjoyed the privilege and pleasure of singing his songs, which is the quickest way for removal of such prejudice. People who give a little time to these songs, usually end up by finding that they reveal themselves as veritable gems of lyric beauty. To the student certainly they illustrate with forceful clearness that Liszt is the true connecting link between Schubert and the moderns.

It was intimated earlier in this article that no writer of songs ever equalled the sublime simplicity of Mozart. Perhaps it would be well to add that few composers ever approached him in genuine spontaneity of melody and in harmonic distinctiveness. Johannes Brahms was one of the few great lyricists to accomplish this. His melodies have a consummate breadth and severe beauty and are always free from viscid sentimentality. Brahms is extensively represented by his *Lieder* on records. The foremost singers of the day have almost inevitably turned their attention in part to his songs. One of our favorite recorded groups was made by Elena Gerhardt, whose artistry in portraying the different moods of the songs needs no exploitation. On three Victor discs (Nos. 7794, 7793, 6755), she gives us *Auf dem Kirchhofe*, *Maedchen spricht*, and *Vergebliches Staendchen*; *Feldeinsamkeit*, *Die Nachigall* and *Staendchen*; and *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer* and *Von ewiger Liebe*. A well selected group which makes in reproduction a delightful half-hour recital.

### Not Easily Forgotten

It can be truly said of Brahms' *Lieder* that they elevate rather than regale our feelings. They are, for that reason, not easily dismissed from mind, once they are heard or sung.

Hugo Wolf is considered by many to be the greatest composer of songs since Schubert. Yet, until a few years ago, his work remained in relative obscurity. Certain artists of high calibre such as Julia Culp and Elena Gerhardt, however, courageously afforded his songs a prominent place in their programs.

Wolf, doubtless, can be compared favorably with Wagner as a reformer. Certainly he did as much for the *Lied* as Wagner did for the music drama. Indeed, Wolf was greatly influenced by Wagner, although he was never an imitator.

Like Schubert, Wolf never indulged in excesses. He afforded the accompaniment a new importance beyond the significance it had gained through Liszt. I might venture to say that in reality Wolf's *lieder* are virtually duets for voice and piano.

In Wolf's songs we find all sorts of characters faithfully portrayed. Excellent examples of his character delineation in music can be found on one side of a record (sung by Kipnis) in the latest *Wolf Society Set* (number 5). Here will be found his incomparable musical representations of a wandering minstrel, a soldier and a reckless cavalier. *Der Feuerreiter* (*The Fire-Rider*) is another striking instance of Wolf's unusual ability to realize characterization in music, and so too is *Der Tambour* (*The Drummer*).

Such songs as *Biterolf*, *Er ist's*, *Verschweigene Liebe* and *Verbogenheit* are deeply poetic, songs of sentiment, but not songs full of viscid sentimentality. These *lieder* are all characteristic of Wolf's unusual musical sensibilities. The more one becomes acquainted with his songs — the more one realizes their worth.

Recordings of Wolf's *lieder* are plentiful with the *Wolf Society* issues. If one were to ask me to recommend a single unit, I think I might endorse the latest (number 5), although no single set could possibly suffice for one truly acquainted with the composer's unusual output.

### **Erudite Workmanship**

Wolf may be less freely melodic than Brahms, but his workmanship is more erudite and he certainly reveals a deeper literary insight than the latter. Although it is true that Brahms' *lieder* are free from excessive sentimentality, it is even more true of Wolf's *lieder*. As an example of Wolf's outstanding insight into the literary aspect a comparison of his setting of Goethe's *Anakreon's Grab* with that of Schubert's should be made.

The "Golden Age of Song" is past but the heritage it has bequeathed us takes on added significance year by year. Today a genuine *liederabend* is a rarity, yet when offered by a real artist the critics manifest raptures of approval. The recording companies have issued many sets of *lieder* performed imperishably by the foremost exponents of the art which would seem to contradict the oft-expressed opinion that *lieder* singing is waning in popularity. These fine recordings permit

one to form their own "evening of song". The broadcasting companies, however, have contributed little in the way of *lieder* programs. It is our opinion that they err many times in their judgment of the listeners' tastes. Or it may be that it is difficult to procure singers who can project these great works with the consummate artistry they demand, for the works of the master lyricists can become boresome and tedious in the hands of singers whose temperament, and mentality are unequal to the task. A singer who is indifferent to the texts of the songs can never interpret them, can never grasp their implications. Unfortunately many of our so-called "great artists" today fail in this respect. They approach the works of the masters like automatons and sing with a manufactured intelligence which is as obvious as it is insincere.

Whether there will be another "Golden Age of Song" remains open to speculation. Much that is written nowadays is fragmentary and insignificant. There is utter lack of spontaneity and naturalness and an overabundance of banality and sentimentality. Yet, there are giants on the horizon. Will they manifest themselves in this changing world, or will they recede and fade away like Charles Lamb's dream children?

### **Strauss' Importance**

The most significant figure in the world of *lied* today is Richard Strauss. His many songs abound with that unsurpassed melodic charm which is the basis of the contrapuntal affluence of his orchestral works. Strauss many times approaches Schumann in strength of romantic feeling and exuberance. Like Liszt he uses unusual key changes to paint an unbroken and continuous tone-picture. But Strauss is no mere imitator. His songs are definitely original and cover a wide range of subjects. Take for example his tender *Wiegenlied*, his twilight fantasy *Traum durch die Daemmerung*, his devotional *Allerseelen* and his fervent *Zueignung* (a love song of unusual intensity). These are all significant and highly original songs. Then there are such masterpieces as *Befreit*, *Caecilia*, *Freundliche Vision* and *Ich trage meine Minne*. One needs only to hear these songs well sung but once to realize their merits. If ever Strauss' orchestral works become buried beneath the dust of time, his *lieder* will, I believe, perpetuate his fame as one of the outstanding musicians of all times.

I cannot close without a word about the songs of two composers who have been un-

(Continued on Page 186)

# Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: A. P. De Weese, Paul Girard, William Kozlenko,  
and Peter Hugh Reed

(Records are tested on a higher-fidelity machine with frequency range from 40 to 10,000 cycles. Needles used are shadowgraph steel and chromium, thus insuring full musical response.)

## ORCHESTRAL

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Opus 92*; played by the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, direction Arturo Toscanini. Victor set No. 317, five discs, price \$10.00.

THE first thing that struck me about this new set of the *Seventh* was the recording. It is stupendous, and it is wonderfully clear in those delicate, almost fanatically whispered pianissimos of Toscanini's. It is a true achievement in that art, which, as yet, is hardly recognized as an art — the art of tone reproduction, of sealing musical sound in all its infinite colors, in the scope of its expression, in such a manner that the machine can release it and reproduce the wonder of that sound with a sufficient degree of actuality and unexampled fidelity to make one believe they are truly listening to the artists in person. This is the art of the recording engineer, whose name never figures on the label of a record, whose prestige is never exploited outside of the laboratory, whose identity is shamefully hidden, yet whose work can in its honesty or dishonesty destroy completely the best interpreter's art.

Toscanini's reading of the *Seventh* is more intensified in its dynamics than Weingartner's. He makes it more heroic than the celebrated Dalmatian conductor, less literal. It is a most vivid performance, one that does not permit you to relax as you listen, but instead holds you spellbound, enthralled, and when it is all over — after the rush, the sweep of the Cossack fury of the finale — leaves you amazed at the compelling energy of the conductor.

The introduction of the first movement is taken slightly slower by Toscanini, but it is nonetheless vital. His first movement proper is marked by wide dynamic contrasts, the themes are sharply etched, particularly in the middle section, where strangely enough Toscanini does not strive to rid the music of its

convulsive characteristics. The celebrated *Allegretto*, long regarded as the heart of the work, is paced by Toscanini — I would say — as it is marked. He has been criticized for taking this movement too fast, but after one has heard his breath-taking reading of the scherzo, which after all is marked *Presto*, we relate the two movements and feel more in accord with the conductor's reading. His finale is surely played with a stress on the *con brio*. The brilliance of this performance cannot be described.

The woodwind section of the N. Y. Philharmonic show up well in this performance. I particularly like the quality and the balance of the woodwinds and the horns of this orchestra, less glowing than the Philadelphia Orchestra, perhaps, but more true to their concert hall character.

Many music lovers are going to ask the question, which set of the *Seventh* shall I buy? Unquestionably, there are two fine performances of this great work available at the moment in this and Weingartner's recording. Not every man can afford two sets, which would be the ideal way of solving the problem, for then one would not become too closely wedded to a single interpretation. After all, the vitality of Toscanini's reading, its extraordinary precision and eloquence, might well preclude one's enjoyment of this symphony under another man's direction, no matter how accomplished or great he might be, unless a contrast were encountered upon occasion. And so too might Weingartner's performance, for it also is not without its fine merits. This is one of the things that records can too easily do if we are not careful. The fact, that this is Toscanini's only Beethoven performance on records will undoubtedly make many people reluctant to pass this set up, and for this I would not blame them. But which ever set of the *Seventh* you acquire, I feel fully justified in saying I'm certain you will derive much satisfaction from it.

—P. H. R.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2 in D major, Opus 73*; played by London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia set No. 265, five discs, price \$7.50.

**T**HIS is another outstanding symphony recording, both from the interpretive as well as the mechanical standpoints. I have never heard the woodwinds or the horns of the London Philharmonic Orchestra so splendidly set forth. The whole thing shows the work of master hands at the helm of the orchestra and the recording control board.

Beecham keeps the music buoyant, vivid and strong. I particularly like the way he stresses Brahms' rhythms. The peasant in Brahms manifests itself in the broad homespun melody which opens this symphony. There is a certain carefreeness about this opening, a sturdy elation as though he had eaten and drunk well, and was swinging his broad body along a sunlit roadway. There is a certain robust, outdoor quality to the music, and some of that same "Austrian coziness and kind heartedness" that he described in connection with the lake resort in Carinthia, where he wrote the symphony.

We often hear this work referred to as the lesser symphony of Brahms. It is, of course, less profound than the *First* and less picturesque than the *Third*, but it has certain attributes which are not found in the other symphonies. There are, for example, a tenderness and a gaiety in it, that we do not encounter in the others. Too, there is a homespun quality and a conventional sentiment that binds it closer to the earth.

Beecham does well with the contrasts of the first movement; his shadings and dynamics are well made. How alert his mind is to little things, to constructive detail that all too often is passed over. At the end of the development section (side three of the recording), we find this strikingly evidenced. Brahms here gives us a hint of those hushed mystic passages of the first movement of the *Fourth*, his relaxation before the *Recapitulation* is a pitfall for most conductors, but not for Beecham. He lets the music die down gradually to a whisper, but he does not diminish its precision. And that rest that Brahms observes before the broad song of the cellos returns, (a moment of psychological importance with him), a pause which is as expressive as the music itself; all this is correctly sustained by Beecham. Brahms'

usage of rests in the middle of music of seemingly great activity is a subject worthy of a discussion all its own. The *pizzicato* passages at the end of the first movement are nicely etched, the recording engineer has done well by Sir Thomas here.

What a comparison this recording of the first movement makes with the old set of this symphony that Columbia brought out eight or more years ago. Here, for example, is a vivid, highly colored reading, while the old set — made by Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra — was incredibly dull, lacking in strength and color. Beecham's conception is worlds removed from that of the other man. It is in my estimation the most vital reading of this score, considered in its entirety, that the phonograph has had to date.

Stokowski makes more of the slow movement, that is in the matter of sentiment. Beecham seems to find less sentiment here, more breadth. He makes the parts stand off from each other, as an English reviewer has noted. In the long run, I feel that Beecham's reading is going to prove most satisfactory. Everything is so clear, so immaculate, and the emotion he stirs is pre-eminently masculine. Not one of Brahms' most gratifying slow movements, but one that has its moments. This movement has been called complex, but that is largely the reaction of a supine listener. "It is never the complexity of Brahms that makes him difficult for us," says Tovey, "it is simply his originality." And this movement, he goes on to point out, "is intensely original."

The scherzo is one of Brahms' most genial. Surely that "Austrian coziness and kindheartedness" are exemplified here. Beecham leaves us with the pleasantest memories of this movement. The same can be said of the finale also, for Beecham as a matter of fact leaves us keenly grateful to him at its ending for his sterling performance.

Sydney Smith, the English reformer, once said "Humanity is a duty made known and enjoined by revelation . . ." There was much grand humanity in Brahms and surely a fine sense of duty in his revelation of it, particularly in this symphony.

With this set and Toscanini's vivid performance of Beethoven's *Seventh*, phonograph literature is greatly enriched this month. What notable recordings we are getting today — I wonder how many take cognizance of this fact.

—P. H. R.

**BRAHMS:** *Hungarian Dances No. 5 and No. 6*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler. Victor disc No. 4321, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

**T**HE *Hungarian Dances*, written originally for two pianos, were among the first works which made Brahms' name really popular. In the years that followed, wherever Brahms went, modest bands would offer him a serenade by playing him his Hungarian dances, and he would inevitably "thank them with delicate tact." We wonder at Brahms being tactful at all times, for certainly some of the beergarden bands that serenaded him must have played arrangements that offended his aesthetic sense.

There are other *Hungarian Dances*, believe it or not, besides the 5th and 6th. Others which might gain in popularity if as widely exploited as these. It would be interesting to know how many times these dances have been churned out on the air since radio's inception. There are over twenty-five performances of them on records.

These dances are, however, always good fun; particularly when given such a musicianly performance as Arthur Fiedler and the Boston "Pops" give them. And since the recording is a knockout, we recommend this disc to all who admire them.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

**SIBELIUS:** *Festivo (Tempo di Bolero)*, part three of the first set of *Historic Scenes*, Opus 25; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc No. 68590-D, price \$1.50.

**T**HIS work dates from 1899, the year of the *First Symphony* and *Finlandia*. It proves once again Sibelius' ability to construct music successfully out of comparatively slender thematic material. The *Bolero* is of course of Spanish origin. Sibelius does not attempt in this, however, to convey the sunlit intensity or colorful pageantry of the Iberian peninsula in the manner of a Ravel, a de Falla, or a Debussy; his *Bolero*, in fact, outside of the form, is coolly Nordic. I am not familiar with the mileage between Spain and Finland, but I would be inclined to say that Sibelius has not sought to reduce it one little bit in this composition.

If this work does not throw new light on the composer, it again affirms Sibelius' com-

plete understanding of the orchestra and his ability to carry us with him in his realization of a mood. Sir Thomas plays the music with evident relish, and the recording is excellent.

—P. G.

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**TANSMAN:** *Triptyque for String Orchestra*; played by The Curtis Chamber Music Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Louis Bailly. Two Victor discs, Nos. 11944-45, price \$3.00.

**O**RIGINALLY a duplication of this work would seem a foolish gesture on the part of a rival company, but it just happens that the Columbia release of this work, made a year ago by Golschmann and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra despite the excellence of the performance, is too shrill for phonographs. One has the feeling that the microphone was too close to the players, however the fault may have been due to the auditorium in which the records were made. Incidentally, it is probably the reason why the series of recordings we announced when reviewing the Golschmann set have never materialized.

It cannot be said that Dr. Bailly and his group of young players, made up of pupils in the Curtis Institute, play this work with the vitality that Golschmann imparts to it. They give us a good routine performance, one that is better in the animated sections than the contemplative *Andante*. The recording is the thing here, it is the feature of the records, because it is truer and smoother in its string character than the previous recording and will, we feel certain, reproduce adequately on any instrument.

Regarding Transman's *Triptyque*, we cannot add anything on what we wrote last year. At that time, we stated that "it is a work belonging to our day and age; rhythmically vigorous and energetic — restless, contentious at times, and even mechanistic. The pulse of modern life dominates. The machine asserts its influence. But the voice of the *melodist* is not completely submerged by rhythmic mechanism — for Tansman inherits his Polish ancestor's love of poetic melodies, as his second and third movements, prove."

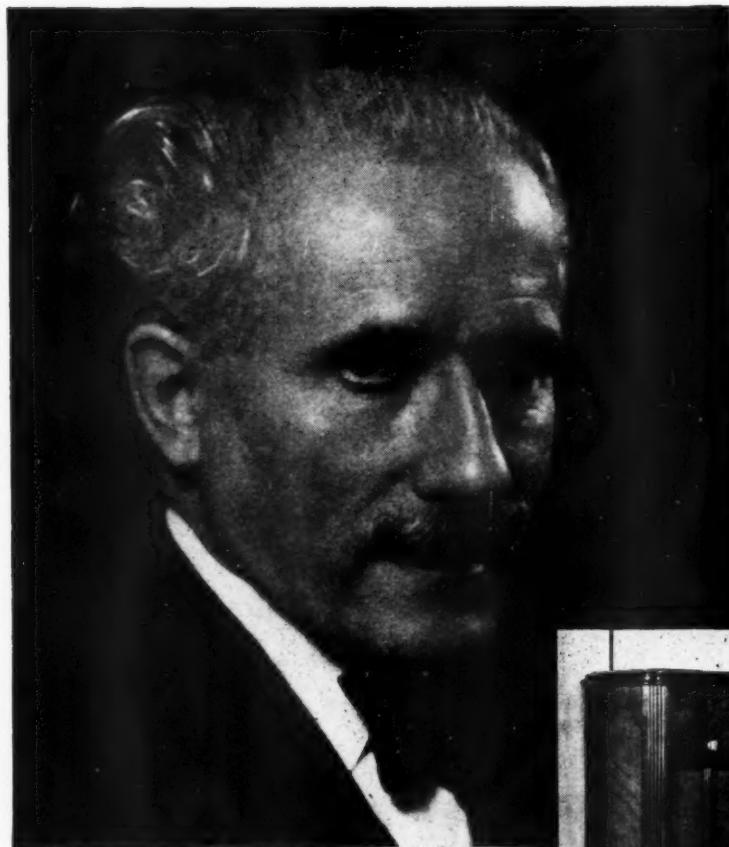
We have found this work a most enjoyable one on many occasions, because it is a work out of the general repertoire and an engaging contemporary expression. It deserves to be included in a library of symphonic recordings.

—P. H. R.

V I C T O R H I G H E F I

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VICTOR



RECORDS

RCA Victor Division, RCA Mfg. Co., Inc., Camden, N. J.

VIVALDI: *Concerto Grosso in D Minor* (No. 11 from *L'Estro armonico*) ; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski conducting. Two Victor discs, 14113-14, price \$4.00.

THIS work — one of twelve concertos, entitled *L'Estro armonico*, written originally for four violins, two violas, 'cello, and organ bass — has an interesting history. For many years it has been accepted as an organ concerto composed by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, the eldest son of the immortal Johann Sebastian. But indefatigable research, several years ago, disclosed the fact that this imposing "organ concerto" — written ostensibly by Wilhelm Friedemann — was really a transcription of a string concerto composed by Vivaldi, and that the version for organ was conceived not by Wilhelm Friedemann, but by his illustrious father. Friedemann, ignominiously, had labelled the manuscript as his own, but, with a slight hint, apparently to ease his troublesome conscience, wrote: "Copied by my father's hand."

Vivaldi composed the work, originally, for a *concertino*, i. e. a small group of solo instruments — consisting of two violins and cello in the first and last movements, and for a solo violin in the middle movement (*Intermezzo*) — always, of course, with the mass of strings, the *tutti*, acting as a balancing lever for the solo instruments.

The present arrangement is one made by Stokowski himself. In some details it recalls to us the transcription for string-orchestra originally made by Sam Franko, who has become deservedly famous for his worthy efforts to resuscitate many neglected masterpieces of foregoing centuries. Stokowski, in his version, has elongated many of the parts, inserting wind instruments, enlarging the dynamic range, and filling out the sonority.

There is small need to speak again of the marvelous tone-quality which Stokowski succeeds so admirably in evoking from his famous orchestra. All those who have heard this orchestra play and are familiar with Stokowski's unique prowess as a conductor are well aware of this particular distinction. Played with penetrating insight into the qualities of the music, rendered with a sumptuousness of tone by all the instrumental sections, particularly by the strings, the *Concerto Grosso* fairly bursts with energy and beauty. Long an avid student of Bach's music, Stokowski has learned the manifold secrets of disclosing the hidden treasure of dynamic contrasts, of

pitting one melodic line against another, of enriching the texture by well-defined accents and, simultaneously, continuing the entire mass of organized sound without breaking the tendrils of its resplendent counterpoint.

Only one thing is disturbing (at least, to me), and that is the exaggerated and blaring peroration at the end (this seems to be an idiosyncracy of Stokowski's, manifest also in almost all of his recent Bach transcriptions) ; in which a piece of music begins like a romance, or a walk in a garden, and ends like a conflagration.

—W. K.

## CONCERTO

MOZART: *Piano Concerto in E flat major*, K-482; played by Edwin Fischer, accompanied by John Barbirolli and his Chamber Orchestra. Victor set No. M-316, four discs, price \$8.00.

THE adjective *beautiful* is a very much overworked word. One hesitates again and again to employ it, and then succumbs because no word conveys more of the intrinsic quality of what one aims to describe. Where tones are artistically combined in music the word *beautiful* says so much, and stirs an inner responsiveness in those who admire it in all art to investigate that which the critic terms *beautiful*.

No word describes this piano concerto better than this overworked adjective, for it is one of the most gracefully beautiful of all Mozart's piano concertos.

The elegance, the manners, the poetic grace of the 18th century are exemplified in the opening movement. Although it is generally conceded that Mozart could produce expressive and spontaneous melodies at will, one often wonders what incentive actually inspired certain tunes, certain moods. This concerto was written for a pupil of his, Babette Poyer by name. One suspects that her talent was no ordinary one, and that her charm was considerable. Mozart's thoughts of her playing — or maybe her beauty — stirred him brightly, happily in the opening *Allegro*. One could go on in this vein conjecturing on the fancies which filled the composer's mind in the hour of composition, but one can never be assured that he is right. All we know is he composed this concerto for a certain Babette Poyer.

The *Andante* that follows has a more sombre beauty. It is Beethovenesque, and yet

it is pure Mozart — Mozart stirred deeply. Does Babette Ployer invade this music? Who can say? If she occupied his mind at all in the hour of his creation of this lovely slow movement, she had the power to inspire notably.

The finale is a distinct surprise and an innovation for Mozart. It opens gayly but changes to an *Andantino cantabile* in the middle. It offers many conjectures, for one sees the smile of a maiden in its phrases, the coquetry of a lady of fashion, and then there is the soft sentiment of the song-like middle section. What thoughts were Mozart's here? The gaiety is resumed, but near the end he breathes a last sigh.

Edwin Fischer plays this work from the heart. His passage work is clean and clear, bright and yet subtly colored, his phrasing is finely pointed, and his poetic response a true reflection of Mozart's inspiration. John Barbirolli gives a sensitive accompaniment. His orchestra is at all times, a worthy associate to the pianist for his realization of the music's sensibilities is veritably absolute. The recording is excellent.

—P. H. R.

## CHAMBER MUSIC

ENESCO: *Sonata No. 3 in A minor, Opus 25* (violin and piano); played by Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin. Victor set No. M-318, three discs, price \$6.50.

GEORGES ENESCO has striven to exploit the melodies of his native Roumania in the manner that de Falla has the music of Spain and Bartok the music of Hungary. Enesco, like young Menuhin, was a child prodigy. He entered the Vienna Conservatory at seven. As a child he loved to play folk songs and gypsy tunes on his little fiddle.

Enesco is one of the greatest musicians living. He has a profound knowledge of the art in all its branches, for he has successfully appeared before the public as a violinist, conductor, composer and pianist. In recent years he has been young Menuhin's teacher and counsellor.

Enesco's *Third Sonata* for violin and piano, although not actually founded on native Roumanian tunes, nevertheless shows the influence that these have had upon the composer's consciousness. The gypsy spirit is in this music too, in its yearning, melancholic moods, and such effects as quarter-tones. This sonata is a rarely poetic work, emotionally

sensitive and ingeniously wrought. The first movement is beautifully worked out, it holds the interest throughout. The second movement, conceived in the manner of a nocturne, is somewhat more evasive. The oriental, *Misterioso* quality of the music, the elusive phrases seem not to hang together at first, but repetition soon establishes its form. The finale is an animated rondo, which toward the end broadens into impassioned passages for the violin over a surging piano accompaniment. This ending is most effective and leaves us with the keenest memories of the music.

It goes without saying that the Menuhins play this work with rare musical insight. Enesco, of course, taught it to them, so their interpretation, their feeling for and production of the music is authoritative. To all who love sensitive tonal poetry, music fantastically wrought with subtle shades and nuances, I recommend this work. The recording is excellent.

-P H R

\* \* \* \*

HAYDN: *Quartet in C Major, Opus 33, No. 3* (*The Bird*); played by the Roth String Quartet. Columbia set No. 257, three discs, price \$4.50.

THIS is the same work that the Roths recorded for Edison a number of years ago. At the time that the Edison edition was placed on the market, the performance by the Roths was hailed as one of the best of its kind on records. It is gratifying to find that the Roths have been allowed to remake this quartet, for it is a particularly fine example of Haydn.

The quartets that form Haydn's Opus 33 were composed in 1781, ten years later than those which formed his Opus 20. Despite the fact that he neglected what was his prime expression in music for ten years, we find on examining Opus 33 that the form has solidified in his mind and matured greatly. The new works introduce for the first time *scherzos* in place of the previous minuet movements. Thus we hear the quartets of Opus 33 referred to as *Gli Scherzi*. They are also termed the Russian quartets because of their dedication to the Russian Grand Duke Paul. The former title is perhaps the better one, since the music owns no Russian characteristics.

The *C major Quartet* is called *Vogelquartett* or *Bird-quartet*. It is when minutely ex-

amined a rather ambiguous title, yet there are certain characteristics of bird twittering in the music which substantiate it. Haydn had a feeling for Nature, and in his music we find the fresh, open-air atmosphere. It is assuredly present here.

This quartet has much to commend it to the music lover's attention, each of the four movements is a consummate expression in itself. The finale, incidentally, is one of the most perfect expressions of its kind Haydn has given us. The Roths play it with evident relish and affection. I can only end by recommending to the music lover that he hear this set.

—P. H. R.

## OPERA

GLUCK: *Orpheus* (*An Opera in Three Acts*) with Alice Raveau as *Orpheus*, Germaine Feraldy as *Eurydice*, Jany Delille as *L'Amour*, the Alexis Vlassoff Russian Choir, and the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris under the direction of Henri Tomasi. Columbia Operatic Set No. 15, eight discs, price \$16.00.

THIS is not a complete recording of Gluck's opera *Orfeo e Euridice*, which in the French version is known as *Orpheus*, but it is a goodly portion of the score. Whether or not the excisions will be considered judiciously made will depend upon one's familiarity with the score.

*Orpheus* is great opera, despite its 18th century flavor, its artificial sentiment, and its lack of action. There is so much lovely music in it, music that is truly eloquent and deeply expressive. It suffers from tonal monotony because of the employment of only three female voices, but then one does not have to play it all at one sitting. I covered this set in a short discourse on foreign recordings in the June issue. Let me repeat myself. "In opera, via the phonograph particularly, when the characters are not properly differentiated vocally the drama suffers a distinct loss of realism. For example — when a mezzo-soprano sings the role of *Orpheus* in an unvisualized performance, the drama is not convincing. Considering that voice is the true delineator of character in opera — the role of *Orpheus* via the phonograph should therefore have been sung by a man to create the right illusion."

The present version of the opera, because of this tonal monotony, has the atmosphere

of the concert hall about it. It becomes more of a cantata than an opera, but is nevertheless most enjoyable because much of the singing is splendid. The burden of song falls on *Orpheus*, who in this case is sung by a lovely contralto singer, new to the phonograph, Alice Raveau, whose luscious voice records excellently. She portrays the unhappy *Orpheus* in an unforgettable manner and sings with great beauty of tone, emotional restraint and purity of enunciation. Germaine Feraldy, familiar to phonophiles for her charming *Manon* performance, is the *Eurydice*. She suggests an attractive *Eurydice*, and she sings the music allotted to her with appropriate intensity. Love is a rather thankless role, but in the slim story a nonetheless important one. A light soprano is always entrusted with the part. Jany Delille's *Love* has the spirit of the part and she sings satisfactorily. Much of the honor of this set go to M. Henry Tomasi and the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris. The conductor knows the score and evidently likes it, for his fine performance bespeaks admiration. The chorus has a rich sonority, but its attack is not always sufficiently incisive.

*Orpheus* is an important score historically. After writing some twenty operatic scores, none of which exhibited any great originality, Gluck suddenly at 49 did an about face and with the score of *Orfeo e Euridice* evidenced himself as a reformer of the lyric stage. Realizing the form of libretto utilized at that time as not only artificial but lacking in dramatic structure, Gluck set about to effect a change. The "childish plots" offended his aesthetic sense, which through intensive study had altered and grown since his youth. Accordingly, he sought out Raniero di Calzabigi, a poet who had also acquired some reputation as a literary critic, and thus procured a new type of libretto for his *Orpheus*. Subsequently, these two collaborated on two other operas by which the composer's name is still remembered today — *Alceste* and *Paride e Elena*. In these scores Gluck has created music which interprets faithfully each situation without useless ornamentation. Padre Martini, in Gluck's day said that he combined in his operas "all the finest qualities of Italian, and many of those of French music, with the great beauties of the German orchestra," which probably explains as much as anything else the reasons why his scores have found universal acclaim. Among his innovations was the removal of the harpsichord from the orchestra and the addition of the harp and trombones.

Thus, we realize this set as an important contribution to phonograph literature. But do not be misled with the idea that its importance is simply historical. *Orpheus* still holds interest on the operatic stage, despite the fact that its action is only "a series of pictures." If one does not wish the whole set, there are many sections which one will want, so listen in part if you haven't ears for the whole. Orpheus' *Lament* (side 3) and his famous aria (side 14) are both eloquent musical expressions of sorrow; and the air *Quel nouveau ciel* (side 12) is filled with tender beauty. The scene where Orpheus charms the Furies (sides 7, 8 and 9) is also worth investigating. You will find all this recorded with fine fidelity.

Domestic Columbia includes a libretto in English only with this set, since there is none published in both French and English in this country at this time. This is a distinct help to one's enjoyment of the drama, and a considerable advancement over the explanatory leaflet which accompanied the issue of this opera in England. —P. H. R.

## PIANO

CHOPIN: *Polonaise in A flat major, Opus 53*; played by Josef Lhevinne. Victor disc No. 1765, ten-inch, price \$1.50.

JAMES Huneker claimed in his day that "none but the heroes of the keyboard can grasp the dense chordal masses, the fiery projectiles of tone" in the *A flat Polonaise*. Since Lhevinne gives a brilliant performance of this composition, one clearly executed and thoughtfully worked out, we suppose he should be termed a "keyboard hero."

It's not hard to comprehend Huneker's assertion that "there is imaginative splendor in this thrilling work, with its thunder of horse-hoof and fierce challenges," for the work has a military character to it. The only difficulty is to understand the extent of his rapture, for he goes on at great lengths — "What fire, what smoke and sword-thrusts and clash of mortal conflict!" The last is a little too much — "the clash of mortal conflict" — is only encountered when the amateur tries to play this composition and gets sadly mixed up in his execution of difficult chords and runs — to say nothing of incorrect tempo.

Huneker was right about the "hero", that is if we admit the hero as a virtuoso of the keyboard. Lhevinne has long demonstrated

his fine musicality in connection with Chopin, and his modern approach to the famous Pole's music: the necessity for clear enunciation, clean rhythm and the avoidance of stressing sentiment. Why Victor hasn't given us an album from Lhevinne is something we can't understand! It would be an album for the discriminating music lover, a boon to the ambitious student. The recording in this disc seems a little better than in Lhevinne's earlier releases. —P. G.



WALTER GIESEKING

MOZART: *Alla Turca*; and HANDEL: *The Harmonious Blacksmith*; played by Walter Gieseking. Columbia disc 68595-D, price \$1.50.

OCCASIONALLY a great pianist can take compositions that have become wearisome through the constant bad playing of young students, and endow them with the freshness with which they were originally conceived, so that they again sound like new creations of genius. This is what Gieseking has done with the almost over-familiar *Turkish March* and *The Harmonious Blacksmith*. Sincere music lovers, on the behalf of good music, should see that young pianists of their acquaintance should have the benefit of this disc to serve as a model and an inspiration; it will be a much needed lesson.

The Turk, in eighteenth century literature, was considered a comic figure, and the *Turkish March* is in spirit a scherzo. Gieseking's famed clear finger-work, his freedom from mannerisms, and his cool detachment unite

to give us a crystal clear *March*. The small bell-like tone, with its fine gradations, records with such exceptional purity that the piano used harpsichordally acts exactly as it should — like a piano imitating a harpsichord; this is particularly noticeable in the twang of the full chords.

Handel's *Air with Variations*, from his *Fifth Harpsichord Suite*, is played with the same admirable taste and finished artistry. Mr. Giesecking does not make the same repeats that are indicated in the score at hand. It should not be out of place to state once more that it was not Handel who named this air *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, but one William Lintern, a pianist of Bath, who many years later favored it in his repertoire and published it under this title to give it a more personal association with himself, a former blacksmith's apprentice.

—A. P. D.

### VIOLIN

BEETHOVEN: *Romance No. 1. in G Major, Op. 40*; played by Efrem Zimbalist, violinist, and the Japan Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nicolai Shiferblatt. Columbia disc 68596-D, price \$1.50.

THIS record has much to recommend it and much to condemn it. Its assets are attributable to Beethoven and to Zimbalist. Beethoven's graceful romance evokes the exemplary playing that Zimbalist can always be counted on to give us, and his vibrant tone is richly recorded. The accompaniment of the Japanese orchestra is so inadequate that we can not overlook it. The orchestral voices are poorly reproduced, and the spiritless orchestra lags behind the soloist instead of giving him support. The poor result was undoubtedly due to insufficient rehearsal.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

SAINT-SAENS: *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Opus 28*, played by Jascha Heifetz, violin, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, John Barbirolli, conducting. Victor disc. No. 14115, price \$2.00.

IT is a platitude, I confess, to say that if the artistry of a man is of unstinted excellence then anything he will do in his sphere of art will reflect, proportionately, this excellence; be the music of superlative order like that of Bach or Beethoven or Mozart, or of lesser vintage like that of Bruch or Paganini or Saint-Saens. Heifetz has long ago vindicated himself from the charge of being merely a dazzling fiddler: heir, in all, to an amazing technique and an uncanny

grasp of all the bewildering tricks of his profession. His interpretations of the music of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms, and Sibelius have placed him in the forefront of the greatest living violinists. Moreover, there is no necessity at this juncture to iterate the many factors which distinguish him from some of his more notable contemporaries. We are all familiar, I am sure, with the unique gifts of Heifetz as a musician.

For the listener, the proof of music lies of course in its execution. Here is a piece of music — one under discussion — which every struggling tyro, studying the violin, comes to face soon after he has successfully mastered his positions and achieves some security in playing. Unfortunately, the *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* is music of no intrinsic consequence: music which, if never heard, will not be sorely missed. There must be, to paraphrase a long proboscis comedian, "a million of them". Yet, such an artist like Heifetz can endow even a piece of tonal persiflage — such as this one — with some degree of importance. Without reducing his interpretation to lush exhibitionism, he renders the piece with more than adequate beauty. To the large musical following of Heifetz, this item will certainly prove welcome; to the more scholarly, it will suffice as another proof of this violinist's great musical gifts.

The accompanying ensemble. The London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the conductor, John Barbirolli, give Heifetz a sympathetic background; while the recording is of the usual higher-fidelity standards.

\* \* \* \* —W. K.

CHRYSANTHEMUM and SONG OF FARE WELL, played by Michael Weiner, violinist, accompanied at the piano by Emil Konevsky. 10-inch Columbia disc, 261-M, price 75c.

GYPSY music has a wide appeal all its own and it is good to have two authentic examples from a musician who has studied it deeply. The two folk songs here recorded are similar in type. The violin boldly sings their sweet sadness, the single melody giving way to a more intensified expression in double stopping. The full-bodied harmonies are charged with emotion at the climaxes. Mr. Weiner's violin responds with sympathy to the natural feeling of the music, so much so that we actually hear a gypsy fiddling away for heart's ease. Emil Konevsky's smooth piano accompaniments are remarkably attuned to the solo instrument. The recording is good.

—A. P. D.

## VOCAL

HANDEL: *Ch'io Mai Vi Possa Lasciar d'Amare*; and *Te Deum*; sung by Marian Anderson, with piano accompaniments by Kosti Vehanen. 10-inch Victor disc, 1767. price \$1.50.

GOOD, or even musically acceptable, Handel singing is rare, but on this record Marian Anderson, like another singer of her race, Roland Hayes, has the ideal emotional and technical equipment for its rendition.

*Ch'io mai vi possa lasciar d'amare* is an air sung by Emira in Act III of the opera *Siroe*. The singer playfully sings of a steadfast love that can always cheer her in sorrow or gladness. The contralto's voice assumes a ready quality which gives clarity and lightness to the lively song.

The *Te Deum* exhibits a very different aspect of Miss Anderson's art. The voice becomes heavy and warmly sonorous for the music's noble solemnity, and voices a personal religious appeal. Here Handel is on a plane of sublimity rare even to him, and to be heard only in the spirit of reverence.

It is unfortunate that the labelling *Te Deum* is so inadequate that it has been impossible to find the selection in either the German Handel Society's edition of the master's works or in two very extensive collections of sheet music that are locally available. The sad character of the music and the text, with its "Misères" do not seem to belong to a *Te Deum*.

Kosti Vehanen's accompaniments have the proper insouciance in the *Siroe* aria and dignified restraint in the *Te Deum*. The recording is superb.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

MILHAUD: *L'Orestie d'Eschyle — Les Choéphores. Incidental Music* — (a) *Vocifération funèbre*, (b) *Liberation*, (c) *Exhortation et Conclusion*, (d) *Les Euménides — Processional*. Performance by the Coecilia Chorus of Antwerp, direction L. de Vocht. Soloists: Mme. Croiza and Mmes. Van Hertbruggen and Van Steenbergen. Columbia set X-64, two discs, price \$3.00.

MILHAUD emerges from the contemporary French musical scene as one of the most interesting figures. His productivity to date has been both extraordinary and diversified.

It is a curious fact that little or no information regarding the above music is available in this country at the present time. It was written over twelve years ago for a French production (especially translated at

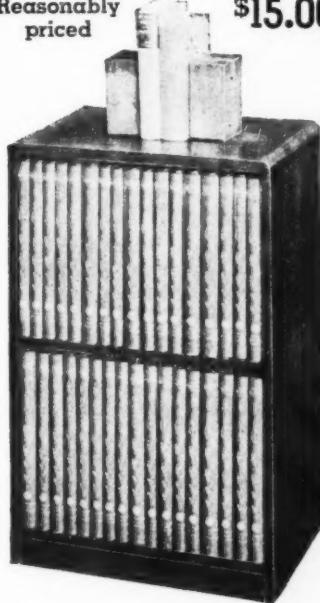
the time by the poet Paul Claudel) of Aeschylus' Greek tragedy — *Choephorae* or *The Libation Bearers*, the second of his trilogy known collectively as *Oresteia*. The importance of Aeschylus in the development of Greek drama need not be dwelt on here, suffice to say it was immense.

Milhaud's Semitic ancestry has been considered accountable for his leaning toward sombre and violent expressions. André Coeuroy, the French critic, has stated that "the savage roughness of Aeschylus' tragedy found a splendid resonance in Milhaud's soul for he was able to express in music the frenzy of vengeful murder, the sacred honor in the presence of baleful presages, the violence of a bloody expiation . . ."

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Eric Blom, the English musicologist, tells us that Milhaud has proven in music "that he is capable of lifting dark and sinister themes to a high level." He further states that his incidental music to Aeschylus tragedy was an attempt to orchestrate stage noises, and in realizing this he employed "a number of percussion instruments in combination with such things as whistling winds, human groans and cries of despair."

This is no ordinary music, but instead music charged with sinister emotions of dark despair, hatred and revenge. Its effectiveness cannot be refuted, although its value via the phonograph will largely depend upon an understanding of its association with the drama.

There is more to be said about this music, and since it deserves further consideration the *American Music Lover* intends to publish a more detailed account later.

This recording owes its inclusion in the Columbia catalog to the fact that it was selected as one of the items to represent Milhaud in the *Carnegie College Music Set*. It is not a new recording, it dates back as a fact at least four years, but it is still an effective one.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

PUCCINI: *Tosca* — *Vissi d'arte*; and *La Bohème* — *Addio di Mimi*; sung by Claudio Muzio. Columbia disc No. 4140, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

MUZIO was a great *Tosca*. She made her debut in this role at the Metropolitan Opera twenty years ago with Caruso and Scotti as her two chief male protagonists. It seems strange today to realize that all three of that eventful performance are now no more. Muzio and Caruso curiously passed at about the same age. How fortunate it is that the phonograph recorded their extraordinary voices so plentifully.

Muzio makes good usage of her lovely *legato* in Tosca's *Prayer*. We have heard more effective endings, that is as far as dramatic intensity is concerned, but none vocally more ingratiating. In Mimi's tender *Farewell*, Muzio sings with great beauty of voice. She does not overstress the drama of the situation here, but instead allows the words to convey the touching story. The recording is good and so too is the balance between the singer and the orchestra.

—P. H. R.

LE RETOUR DU MARIN, and LE PAUVRE LABOREUR, sung by Reynaldo Hahn, 10 inch Columbia disc, 4124-M, price \$1.00.

REYNALDO HAHN, composer and conductor, has made here a surprising record. Accompanying himself at the piano he renders two genuine French folk-songs, *Le Retour du Marin*, in a version from Poitou, and *Le Pauvre Laboure*, from la Bresse a district from old Burgundy. These songs may be found in Julien Tiersot's collection of *Melodies populaires des provinces de France*.

*The Sailor's Return* relates the conversation between a sailor on leave and his wife, each pretending not to recognize the other. He hints at the increase in her family, and she unconvincingly explains this by a second marriage contracted after reports of her husband's death. Without more ado the sailor returns to the sea. Hahn, with his dry voice, captures all the humor and implications of the interview, and within the confines of the droll and monotonous melody gives a subtlety and variety such as hitherto we could expect from Yvette Guilbert alone in this genre. Hahn's inflections and insinuations on the words *Tout doux* are a revelation in suggestive humor.

*Le Pauvre Laboure*, to a sad little melody, tells of the poverty-stricken tenant farmer, who with his children must toil in the fields in all sorts of weather to furnish the wherewithal for the princes of this earth to live.

A single hearing of *The Sailor's Return* will be the best possible sales talk for this record. Many people are sure to find it irresistible.

—A. P. D.

## HARP

BELIEVE ME IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS and MARCH OF THE MEN OF HARLECH, played on the harp by Mildred Dilling. 10-inch Columbia disc, No. 17065-D, price \$1.00.

THE harp is the popular instrument of romance, and Columbia has asked Mildred Dilling to supply suitable selections for harp devotees' consumption. What could be more welcome than songs from the Gaelic countries most closely associated with the instrument? From Ireland the universal favorite, *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms*, and from Wales the martial *March Of The Men Of Harlech*. The arrangements of both are simple, if a trifle more elaborate

than the common versions. The recording is true to the harp's distinctive timbre.

—A. P. D.

#### Regarding Schubert's TROUT QUINTET

We have discovered that Claude Hobday, brother of Alfred, is the player on the double-bass in the set of Schubert's *Trot Quintet* issued by Victor last month. The line-up of the musicians are: three members of the Pro Arte Quartet — Onnou, violin; Prevost, viola; Maas, cello; Claude Hobday, double-bass, and Schnabel, piano. The labels on this set, it appears, were incorrectly printed in England, hence the mistake in this country.

#### EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 161)

This month, we have an article on *lieder*, which we hope all our readers will peruse. ARTHUR WILLIAM WOLF, the author, a non-professional singer, has been a musical director in radio, and more recently associated with the Hungarian American Society in its exploitation of the recent nation-wide celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of Franz Liszt's death. Mr. Wolf's knowledge of *lieder* is all-embracing and his comprehension of same is the result of long years of study. Any reader who might be interested in having a group of *lieder* recordings — say twenty-five or thirty — specifically recommended, so that they might add a comprehensive collection of same to their library, need only write us and we will confer with Mr. Wolf and devise such a list.

\* \* \* \*

THE death of Ossip Gabrilowitsch last month removed from the contemporary scene a great and highly valued musician. This notable pianist and conductor was born in Petrograd, Russia, in 1878. He studied piano with Anton Rubinstein and composition with Liadoff, Glazounoff and Navratil. In 1914, Gabrilowitsch came to America. In 1917, he was chosen as conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

The value of the modern phonograph is again evidenced in the few examples of Gabrilowitsch's artistry, which are preserved for posterity. Although his orchestral recordings date back a number of years, they still testify to his exacting musicianship. His finest contribution to the phonograph was his

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### Features

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#### An Operatic Masterpiece

GLUCK: *Orpheus* (Opera in 3 acts)  
Alice Raveau, Germaine Feraldy, Jany Delille, the d'Alexis Vlassoff Russian Choir, Orchestra Symphonique of Paris. Conductor Henri Tomasi.

Acclaimed among the best of recent recordings made in France, this music is beautifully delivered with eloquent singing and artistry. The recording is the amended form of the opera first produced in Paris in 1774. Columbia Operatic set 15, and AM-15.



#### A New Roth String Quartet Release

HAYDN: Quartet in C major (The Bird) Opus 33, No. 3.

Haydn at his best. This work is among the prime favorites of the Roth Quartet and their audiences, and has been in their repertory since they were first organized. Columbia set 257 and AM-257.



#### Florent Schmitt and the Calvet Quartet

SCHMITT: Quintet for Piano and Strings, Second Movement — Lento.

Schmitt is one of France's foremost contemporary composers, and a pupil of Faure. His Quintet, Opus 51, is considered one of the greatest of French chamber works. The Lento section is written in a rich and moving style.



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performance of the piano part of Schumann's *E flat Quintet*, made in conjunction with the extinct Flonzaley Quartet. In fact, his performance of the piano part of this favorite work still remains the best recorded. A little ten inch piano disc of Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey* and Delibes' *Passepied* from *Le Roi s'amuse*, and a twelve inch disc of 2 two-piano pieces made in conjunction with Harold Bauer, are the only contributions of his pianistic art extant. Remembering Gabrilowitsch's splendid revelations of Bach, his searching performance of the *B minor Mass*, makes us wish that he had been allowed to record some of this music. By such examples of the outstanding performances of an era, the phonograph could make unusual musical history.

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### WELL-SPRINGS OF LIEDER

(Continued from Page 172)

justly neglected — Gustav Mahler and Max Reger. The former composed many songs of genuine worth. They deserve to be heard more often for they contain much that is beautiful. An outstanding example of Mahler's creative gifts as a *lieder* composer is revealed in his *Kindertotenlieder* — a cycle of five songs tenderly wrought and full with soul-stirring grief — which Heinrich Rehkemper has so artistically sung for Polydor records. ". . . their everlasting beauty together with the *Song of the Earth* (*Lied von der Erde*)," the German writer Richard Specht tells us, "form the strongest pledge of their author's immortality."

Max Reger's songs combine melodic charm and harmonic opulence as well as consummate artistry. One of Reger's most popular songs, *The Virgin's Slumber Song*, is really an embellished setting of a mediaeval German Christmas Carol, but it affords a striking instance of his musical ingenuity in its accompaniment, which unquestionably adds much to the song. *An die Hoffnung*, to be found on a record, is an example of Reger's work which belies the accepted belief that his music is sterile and uninspired.

Composers of other nations have contributed greatly to the literature of song, but I have concerned myself here exclusively with the *lied*. Perhaps at some later time it will be my pleasure to trace the developments of the lyric art of other nations, for there are many notable works outside the sphere of *lieder* which have withstood the onslaughts of time and which to paraphrase Addison — "flourish in immortal youth."

## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Dear Mr. Reed:

Mr. Claude Lapham's article in the July issue proved so interesting, I am sure your readers look forward to hearing further from Mr. Lapham. And may I take this opportunity to mention how much I enjoyed your very excellent reviews of Lapham's *Mihara Yama* and the *Japanese Concerto in C Minor*. I have found these two compositions of exceptional interest and feel that the RCA Victor Company is to be commended for making them available in such splendid recordings.

Your recent article on Leopold Stokowski came at the opportune time. One of my greatest musical experiences was in hearing Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Ann Arbor May Festival. And the fact that RCA Victor undertook to sponsor the Orchestra's tour made the concert doubly interesting. It also gave music lovers the chance to hear Charles O'Connell, recording director for Victor, conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra in, among other works, his own superb orchestrations of Debussy's *Canope* and *Minstrels*. And that completed the perfect picture of the Philadelphia Orchestra in Ann Arbor: the picture of Stokowski and O'Connell, two men who have done more for the art of recorded music, conducting the orchestra which has figured so prominently in the evolution of recording great music . . .

Thank you for such a magazine as THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER. It is a great little journal.

Sincerely yours,  
W. Wayne Smith

Grand Rapids, Mich. Aug. 28, 1936.

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### Regarding Mr. Snyder

To the Editor.

Dear Sir:

I, for one, heartily agree with Mr. R. W. Snyder in everything he said in his article *'A Broadside to Broadcasters'*, in the September issue of THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER.

Mr. Snyder, however, does not go far enough in his comparison between radio and the phonograph. It should be noted that, having a good machine and first class records, one is always sure of enjoyable reproductions. Not so with the radio. Atmospheric and man made "static", interferences between the unnecessarily numerous broadcasting stations and, above all, careless broadcasting mar or completely spoil the few good programs so often that a coincidence of high grade program, good broadcasting and favorable conditions for enjoyable reception is almost as rare as the winning ticket at the sweepstakes. To me, at least, radio has not only "muffled its chance" but it has grown into one gigantic nuisance. I only hope that one of the inventors of the gadgets, they are adding from time to time to new models of radio sets, will invent a switch whereby one can turn off his neighbour's radio set.

With best wishes,  
E. Kun

Elmhurst, L. I., N. Y. Sept. 5, 1936.

(Continued on Page 190)

# Radio Sells Itself Too Cheaply

An Answer to R. W. Snyder

By ARTHUR J. DALY

ANY group gathering in any home anywhere in the United States has an always implied, though often unspoken attitude, of condescension, of bored or indifferent tolerance, for Radio. But this does not necessarily mean that anything is lacking. Sometimes people are bored or indifferent not from lack of any given desideratum, but from surfeit thereof. So in considering the question, *What Does Radio Lack?*, I have the conviction that it is not particularly a lack that causes the distress, but a too muchness.

A too muchness that might well heed the advice of Hamlet to certain Players — "Nor do not saw the air too much . . . but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise."

How delightfully apt! And how pertinent — the splitting the ears of the groundlings and — the rest. Commercial traffic weighed the scales heavily in favor of the groundlings. Mass consumption necessitated mass appeal, hence the too much sawing of the air, the lack of temperance that might have given it smoothness. But radio has suffered for it and will continue to suffer. Even the mob eventually tires of the fellow who tears a passion to tatters, and when the mob happens to be one not entirely devoid of discrimination, the robustious fellow soon gives himself away.

Radio has sold itself too cheaply. What might have been a splendid force for advancement of esthetic and educational values has become a sell-out to the lowest bidder, which in this case is parenthetically the lowest common denominator of cultural standards.

I think R. W. Snyder's paragraph in his *Broadside To Broadcasters* in the September

AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER is an excellent take-off for any consideration of this sorry state of affairs. He says in part, "A half dozen years ago radio had the same chance with me that the phonograph had. Radio muffed its chance. I honestly don't know how it could get me back to the tingling and explorative state of mind that I had when I first got a radio. It could have fed me enough of the real thing to keep me interested, but it spewed forth cheapness in such clouds that I was suffocated trying to hang on for the few breaths of freshness here and there. It wore me out, and now I'm indifferent . . .".

That paragraph speaks for a lot of people. But now, what to do about it? Frankly, I don't see any alternative for they who get shouted at, but to take what they will from radio, and for the rest, give it a thumb of the nose or a turn of the dial.

The root trouble of radio is the root trouble of most other things of potential esthetic or cultural value in this country. It goes right back to the way we're all educated into the chasing of the dollar. Radio can hardly be blamed, if it piles on all that traffic will bear. We are still individually and collectively a nation of worshippers of the idol Success. Radio is merely another Success story in the typical American idiom. With such a background, such a heritage, how can we expect Radio to throw off the shackles of the shekels and emerge pure and undefiled, to sing to us like the morning stars. And so until such a millennium occurs, I'm afraid we shall have to listen again to Hamlet as he says — "O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready."

# Swing Music Notes

By ENZO ARCHETTI

ON September 19th the Saturday Night Swing Session broadcast over Station WABC brought to an end a series of fourteen swing music programs. Under the able direction of Phil Cohan of the Program Department of the CBS with Paul Douglas as its suave announcer and commentator, and the ace of white trumpeters, Bunny Berigan, with a picked band, this Saturday night feature rose from a mere novelty program created during the height of the swing furore to a sincerely artistic program intended to demonstrate, for educational as well as recreational purposes, America's contributions to modern music. Its purpose was brilliantly accomplished. The system of inviting swing artists of the day to sit in with the band brought to the microphone one of the finest array of jazz instrumentalists and vocalists conceivable.

The last three programs were exemplary of the entire series. On September 5th, the guests were Cappy Barra and his Harmonica Swing Ensemble, who surprised the audience at the New York's First Swing Concert by living up to what they claimed to be, in spite of the odd assortment of instruments they played. This is no mere Borrah Minnevitch Harmonica Rascals group. Lee Wiley, swing vocalist, who is a delight to both the ear and the eye, presented her own inimitable style as she had done several times before in the series. Hollywood has overlooked something great in Lee Wiley. Caspar Reardon demonstrated again that music on the harp can swing. What he did with the *St. Louis Blues* must be heard to be believed. Frank Froeba, swing pianist of many years standing and now at the Onyx Club gave a demonstration of his smooth technique. These artists, with Bunny Berigan and his orchestra, directed by Mark Warnow, presented a swing program of the first order.

Bunny Berigan's and the orchestra's parts in this series were by no means secondary. They were no mere background against which the individual artists could be relieved. They were the nucleus of the program, and their share of the music was always of major interest. Bunny Berigan was the inspirational center of the program. When he swung, everyone else swang with him. And that was most of the time. The mantle of Bix Beiderbecke fits gracefully and naturally about his shoulders. For the quality and the variety of his ideas, for the brilliance of his technique he deserves the title of the greatest white trumpeter of today.

The orchestra Bunny assembled for his support on these programs is one of the finest of the white swing band. Presumably, its make-up is temporary since the members are staff musicians of the CBS. But it deserves to be made a permanent organization because of the unity of its style and the individual excellence of its members. The personnel of the band is:

Trumpet—Bunny Berigan, Mike Meolla, and N. Anatoli.

First Alto—Artie Manners.  
Second Alto—Pete Pumiglio.  
Tenor—"Babe" Russin and Hank Ross.  
Trombone—Jerry Colonna and Russ Ganner.  
Piano—Raymond Scott (alias Harry Warnow).  
Bass—Lou Shoope.  
Guitar—Frank Worrell and Vincent Woffei.  
Drums—Johnny Williams.

On September 12th the guest artists were Artie Shaw and His String Ensemble. Shaw is the clarinetist whose style is so strikingly like Benny Goodman's at times and then again so reminiscent of Jimmy Dorsey. It was he who at the First Swing Concert amazed the audience by appearing with a classic string quartet, plus a few other instruments, and proved they could swing. On this Saturday Night Session he did it again. His string quartet began with all the sobriety of the Flonzaley playing a Beethoven quartet; then a break — and the entire outfit was off with some of the finest swing that ever went over the air. (This is an organization which well deserves the popularity it has gained since that history-making First New York Swing Concert. Albert Duffy, violinist of Arkansas Travelers — California Ramblers — fame, demonstrated he deserves a place alongside of Joe Venuti and Stuff Smith. Then Lee Wiley again—by request.) Bunny and the band were in excellent spirits. They did some of the finest work of the series this night.

For the closing broadcast Dick McDonough and Carl Kress played a specially composed guitar duet. Loretta Lee sang, and a group of young instrumentalists averaging about fifteen years of age and calling themselves the Four Dukes of Swing gave a creditable imitation of Cab Calloway. The real highlights of the broadcast, however, were Bunny and the band again.

The CBS, Phil Cohan, Paul Douglas, and Bunny Berigan deserve the gratitude of all the swing enthusiasts in America. They created a series which was unique, entertaining, educational, and courageous. Yes, courageous, because these programs were launched at a time when swing had become a fad like jig-saw puzzles, miniature golf, and knock-knock songs and proved that swing was no mere fad to be plucked to death and forgotten but a definite contribution to music worthy of serious consideration. They succeeded admirably and it is gratifying to know that this swing music series was so well received that a new series is planned to begin October 3rd at 6:45 P. M., on WABC. If the same high standards are maintained, it will be most welcome.

In the opinion of this column only two serious criticisms can be levelled against the Saturday Night Swing Session: that the Negro artist and his contribution to swing were not sufficiently represented and that a half hour on the air is entirely too short a time. It is sincerely hoped that the new series will correct both these causes for adverse criticism.

(Continued on Page 192)

# In the Popular Vein

By VAN

## BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*Thou Swell*, and *Sugar Foot Stomp*. Artie Shaw and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7735.

Artie Shaw deserves a world of credit for digging up that grand old Rodgers and Hart tune, *Thou Swell*, and dusting it off in an appropriately witty and discreet swing version. Of all the top-notch numbers this outstanding song-writing team has contributed to our light musical stage, this is one of the most attractive and Shaw embellishes it neatly, at times, as in his own adroit clarinet solos and at other times, rather tryingly, as in the tenor solos. The arrangements, however, are always fresh and musically (with a bow to Griselle's *Nocturne* in the introduction to *Sugar Foot Stomp*) while the sort of work the band is striving to do deserves credit in general as a less raucous type of swing playing than the general run.

\* \* \* \*

AAAA—*La Bomba*, from *The Big Broadcast of 1937*, and *Mi Sombra*, Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra. Victor 25389.

In *La Bomba*, Ralph Rainger once more gives us a rumba of exceptional attractiveness, for, aside from being merely a spirited bit of writing in the Cuban idiom, it is far better music than most and attests to the versatility of its composer. Cugat, who has the ideal approach to this sort of thing and who is here aided immeasurably by an unusually attractive female vocalist, does very striking work on it and backs it up with one of his typical folk tune adaptations.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Sing, Baby, Sing*, and *Make Believe Ball Room*. Ruby Newman and his Orchestra. Victor 25401.

Ruby Newman gives us more dash and sparkle here than in anything he has yet done on records. The inevitable two trombones may get you down a bit but the clarinet solos are really all right, and both sides come off with neatness and vivacity.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*You Turned the Tables on Me*, from *Sing Baby Sing*, and *Here's Love In Your Eyes*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25391.

In-and-out fare for Goodman to be giving us, this is still several notches above the general run of commercial dance recordings. Goodman's grand ensemble work, the invariably first-rate solos and the generally high quality of his arrangements, plus the effective (if occasionally strident) vocalizing of Helen Ward, can always be counted upon to make a satisfactory job out of even mediocre tunes; and these two are a little better than mediocre.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Looking Down at the Stars*, and *What the Heart Believes*. Hudson-de Lange Orchestra. Brunswick 7727.

Building up slowly but surely to a high degree of popularity (on discs, anyway) is the Hudson-de Lange combination, rather unreasonably neglected

by this department until quite recently, but whose work is always worth investigation, even in quasi-commercial tunes, such as these two numbers by Will Hudson himself. It seems that more arrangers (and songwriters) might court the idea of constructing bands around themselves, in view of the paramount importance played by the arrangements in the ultimate success or lack of success achieved by a dance band.

\* \* \* \*

## HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*Dinah*, and *Moonglow*. The Benny Goodman Quartet. Victor 25398.

This record is chiefly important in that it represents the debut on discs (I believe) of a new swing luminary of the very first water, one Lionel Hampton, colored, of Chicago, who plays the vibraphone with an uncanny wizardry that is as delightful as it is incredible. A discovery of Goodman's, he is allowed the lion's share of the solo work on both sides and emphatically makes the most of it. It would be unfair, however, to overlook the piano work of Wilson in *Moonglow*, which certainly comes close to being as fine as anything he has yet done on discs, and this is high praise indeed. All things considered, we should term this one of the finest, most original swing recordings ever made.

\* \* \* \*

AAAA—*In a Jam*, and *Uptown Downbeat*. Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7734.

Here, at long last, is some more sinon-pure Ellington to delight the likes of us who determinedly insist that the Duke is one of the most important people on the entire field of modern American music. If neither of these pieces is representative of the very best Ellington, at least they are so thoroughly Ellingtonian that there is not a measure of them that could possibly have been written or played by anyone but himself and you are likely to get much more out of them on the tenth hearing than on the first, something that can be said of about one dance recording in a thousand.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Clarinet Marmalade*, by Nick La Rocca and the Original Dixieland Band, and *St. Louis Blues*, by Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25407.

It is the interesting notion of Victor to gather together the members of the Original Dixieland Band and (plus a few re-enforcements to fill in the ensemble) record them in the light of present-day ideas of swing. In this case, the arrangement as well as the bulk of the playing is quite in line with contemporary swing, but the solos by Larry Shields (clarinet) and Nick La Rocca (trumpet) are delightfully and amusingly corny, particularly in contrast to the gleamingly up-to-the-minute version of *St. Louis Blues* by Goodman, which deserves and may possibly receive, in the next issue, a good-sized paragraph to itself.

(Continued on Page 192)

## CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from Page 186)

### De Lucia, Bonci, Etc.

To the Editor, Record Collector's Corner.

Dear Mr. Moses:

Your article about Battistini is delightful. I agree with you in each and every respect. I also read the criticism of Mr. Stephen B. Fassett on page 156. He is lucky that he lives in Massachusetts, otherwise I would pay him a visit!! If he wants to know what percentage of the record collectors agree with you on the superiority of De Lucia on Phonotypes, tell him that you know of one collector who will bet 100 to 1 and prove it before responsible critics who must not be collectors. . . .

Regarding Bonci's records, they are not so rare and not so terribly hard to find as thousands of them changed hands just recently.

Yours sincerely,  
L. Dick

New York, Sept. 10th, 1936.

### Regarding Jazz

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,

Although I thoroughly detest jazz (I would not say "jazz-music" because it simply ain't music at all) in all shapes and variations, my curiosity has been aroused for some time to know what the so called "swing-music" really is. . . .

I was just about to write you demanding in this matter when I came across the September issue of the British 'Gramophone' containing an editorial by Mr. Compton Mackenzie which contains a fairly elaborate scientific discussion of this world-important question. I think that this editorial is so excellent and enjoyable, that I suggest you obtain the necessary permission and reprint the same in full for the benefit and joy of your readers. I am sure they will enjoy it as much as I did.

Very truly yours,  
An Electrical Engineer.

N. Y. Sept. 12, 1936.

(This letter was placed coincidentally in the Editor's hand with the completion of the article—*Some Thoughts Inspired by Jazz—in this issue.*)

### On Radio

To the Editor.

Dear Sir:

I am delighted to note that you are going to give us an article on "Needles" in the near future. . . . The article in the September number on 'Broadside to Broadcasters' represents exactly my feelings, and those of most of my friends. The "tripe" and "bunk" that is fed to us by advertisers is nauseating. There is so little good music on the air that it is almost impossible to obtain even one hour's pleasure each evening. Is there nothing that can be done?

Yours very truly,  
E. Sohier Welch

Boston, Mass. Sept. 1936.

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## RADIO NOTES

### MUSIC APPRECIATION HOUR RETURNS TO AIR OCT. 9

The pioneer NBC educational feature, *Music Appreciation Hour*, conducted by Dr. Walter Damrosch, will be heard regularly on Fridays at 2:00 p.m., E.S.T., over both the NBC-Red and NBC-Blue Networks. In previous seasons the program had been broadcast from 11:00 a.m., to 12:00 Noon, E.S.T. This time was moved forward so as to make the program available for schools in every time belt.

The general plan of the Music Appreciation series will follow, except for slight variations, that which has been used during the past eight years. Once again Dr. Damrosch has divided the hour into four graded courses, A, B, C, and D. Each of the courses will serve, in order, elementary and kindergarten grades, grammar schools, high schools and colleges.

On the October 9 inaugural program, Series A will occupy the first half hour and Series B the second half hour. Series C and D will be heard on October 16, thus giving each course 30 minutes of instruction on alternate weeks.

\* \* \* \*

As a part of the tenth anniversary of the formation of the National Broadcasting Company, a series of five Thursday evening programs from 10 to 11 will be given by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Artur Bodanzky, director of the German repertoire at the Metropolitan Opera Company. The series will open on the night of October first with an all-Wagner program and will continue over the NBC-Blue network on succeeding Thursdays throughout the month of October ending on the 29th.

\* \* \* \*

The General Motors Symphony Concerts returned to the air on September 13th and will continue throughout the winter on Sunday nights from 10 to 11. The broadcasts this winter will originate at Carnegie Hall, where the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra under the direction of Erno Rapee will be presented with internationally famous instrumental and vocal soloists. NBC-Red network.

\* \* \* \*

Abram Chasins, talented American composer-pianist, presents a series of lecture-recitals on Saturdays from 12:00 noon until 12:30 over the NBC-Red network. The current programs, called the Chasins Music Series, are similar to the programs which Chasins presented last season; he performs and then comments on the great masterpieces in the literature of the piano.

\* \* \* \*

The Rochester Civic Orchestra returns to the air October 19th for a new series of Monday afternoon programs. The Children's Series by the same orchestra will be heard on Tuesday afternoons from 1:45-2:15, beginning on October 20th. Both NBC-Blue network.

\* \* \* \*

The NBC Light Opera series is on the air from 3:30 to 4:30 on Thursday afternoons presenting favorite melodies from the world of light opera, with concert orchestra and soloists. NBC-Blue network.

\* \* \* \*

The NBC Band Instrument Lessons, which have been presented for several seasons in the past with great success, will be heard this season on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 2:30, beginning on October 14. NBC-Red network.

(Continued on Page 192)

# Record Collector's Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

(Perhaps in no field of collecting does opinion vary so much as on the subject of old recordings. The Editor wishes to state that Mr. Moses' opinions should therefore be considered as purely personal ones.)

ALTHOUGH we were urged last month to discuss Bonci and Plancon, a belated sense of chivalry demands "place aux dames" so consideration is here given to one of the greatest of all dramatic sopranos and probably the most thrilling on records, CELESTINA BONINSEGNA. Many foremost artists have made poor showings when reduced to the grooves of a shellac surface but this singer, the possessor of a really tremendous organ, was so felicitous in vocal placement that her voice was always perfectly reproduced. Even her recordings for the Italian Columbia Company of the 1910 period, notoriously blurred and noisy, are magnificently clear (witness the 10-inch coupling, never issued in this country, of the *Ernani* and *Tosca* arias Nos. 42126-7). Likewise, her domestic Columbias rise far above the average, in fact are outstanding for clarity and nuance. (They are all 12-inch and include the above-mentioned selections on Nos. 30380 and 30355 respectively). Compare these records, for instance, with the regrettable showing of LILLIAN NORDICA who made over thirty attempts to project her famous voice and succeeded not once in so doing.

Boninsegna's recording career started for the Gramophone Company in Milano with so illustrious a partner as DE LUCIA, their only duet together being the *Tardi si fa* from *Faust*, G. & T. No. 054043 which dates from 1904. In the course of the next four years, she recorded more than thirty soli and concerted pieces including such out of the way selections as Leoncavallo's *Ninna-nanna* on G. & T. No. 53392 and *Te Sola* by Sabaino (the noted gramophone maestro) on G. & T. No. 53492. There are many collectors who would gladly forego more important music for these trifles because of their rarity but I should much rather possess her *Pace, pace, mio Dio* (G. & T. No. 053088) even though it is still listed in the HM Catalogue No. 2. Certainly it is the greatest of many great renditions of Leonora's difficult supplication and reveals the beauty of tone which Boninsegna maintained throughout a range which included at the same time the most luscious of low chest tones and the purest, most forward head tones.

When ROSA PONSELLE assumed the austere garb of Norma and proved to the masses that she was an artist of absolutely first calibre (though her Vestale had been equally great and much of her common repertoire, particularly Gioconda, on a like plane), it was said that no one had been able to assume the role since LILLI LEHMANN forsook the *Walsungs* for the *Druids*. (She recorded it, by the way, for Odeon in 1907 on No. 99937). This was, of course, merely a publicity notice. Boninsegna was a fine Norma as were ROSA RAISA (Vocalion No. 55001) and GIANNINA RUSS (Fonotipia No. 39821) among others. Had Boninsegna entered a field as devoid of rivals as that in which Ponselle

found herself, then such publicity stunts might have been pulled for her. As it was, she came, she sang, she left and America never seemed to realize that it had lost one of the great voices of the century. But her records endure and capture for her an overdue fame. The last current vestige of a more propitious day, vocally speaking, will be removed when the *Norma Casta diva* No. 5034M is cut out of the next Columbia catalogue. This serves to remind us of the need of preserving what we have and explains the goal of the *International Record Collectors' Club*, the *American Record Collectors' Association* and the emergence of such firms as makes a business of dealing in rare records. "*Sic transit gloria mundi*" — sed non semper!"

Two of the ladies herein mentioned, who were born a little late to be included within the period of my book, "The Record Collector's Guide", will be grouped together in an ensuing article when I undertake the precarious job of criticising those near at hand. It will be a difficult comparison to make since both artists have more than a first name in common.

## THE RECORD COLLECTOR'S GUIDE to AMERICAN CELEBRITY DISCS 1902 — 1912

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## RADIO NOTES

(Continued from Page 190)

### Music Guild

Due to a re-arrangement of the schedule of the NBC Music Guild, no programs have as yet been settled. The new schedule is as follows:

Monday afternoons	2:30—3:00 NBC-Red network
Tuesday afternoons	2:00—2:30 NBC-Red network
Wednesday afternoons	2:30—3:00 NBC-Blue network
Thursday afternoons	2:45—3:30 NBC-Blue network

\* \* \* \*

At least five of America's foremost symphony orchestras will be heard over the coast-to-coast Columbia network each week, including the nation's two finest orchestras, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Others are the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Ford Symphony, and another major orchestra to be announced later. In addition, there will be two student symphony orchestras representing the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Cincinnati Conservatory.

Columbia's 1936-37 schedule as a whole will offer a comprehensive review of many fields of music—orchestra, chamber music, piano, vocal and instrumental—in diversified programs evenly distributed throughout the week. There will be two series of children's concerts given by two famous orchestras, one series to be broadcast on Tuesday afternoons, the other on Saturday mornings. Noted pianists and instrumentalists will present complete cycles of major works by a number of the great masters. The Library of Congress series will present most of the major chamber music works of Brahms. Special attempts will be made throughout the season to distribute important programs throughout the week, instead of concentrating them over the weekend. Watch your daily paper for schedule of these programs.

\* \* \* \*

Deems Taylor, American composer, critic and journalist, has been appointed Consultant on Music for the Columbia Broadcasting System. Versatile and talented in many fields, with a profound knowledge of music and the tastes of the American public, Taylor brings to his new post many qualities of progressive leadership. He will assist and advise Columbia's program department in coordinating its schedule of serious music during the 1936-37 season, and in presenting under the most favorable conditions the great variety of symphonic, choral, vocal, and instrumental features.

Columbia officials feel that Taylor's intimate knowledge of the radio listener's likes and dislikes and his own rich background as composer, critic, music editor and journalist eminently qualify him for his new post.

Commenting upon his appointment, Taylor said:

"Fifteen years ago America was looked upon by the rest of the world as a musical desert, a country that paid fabulous fees to European musical artists but that had no real appreciation of serious music. Today, one of the most striking phenomena of American civilization is our ever-widening interest in the best that music has to offer. This interest, this growing importance of music in our daily lives, is, in my opinion, directly traceable to radio. The radio has become, and will remain, music's most important medium of transmission, and no musician can afford not to take it with the utmost seriousness. Anyone who has a chance to play a part in presenting music to the radio public should—as I do—count himself lucky."

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Although most widely known for his two successful operas commissioned by the Metropolitan—"The King's Henchman," the libretto by Edna St. Vincent Millay, and "Peter Ibbetson"—Deems Taylor has probably done as much to present music in simple and understandable terms to people in all walks of life than any other American musician.

\* \* \* \*

Fritz Reiner, one of the most versatile conductors in the musical world, is directing the first five broadcasts of the Ford Sunday Evening Hour's 1936-37 series on CBS. With him will be heard a group of world famous guest artists. After these broadcasts, Reiner will proceed to California to take charge of the Wagnerian schedule for the San Francisco Opera. He will be heard again over the Columbia network during the season conducting the concerts of the Curtis Symphony Orchestra from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

### IN THE POPULAR VEIN

(Continued from Page 189)

AAA—*B'wanga*, and *Pursuin' the Blues*. Hal Kemp and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7730.

*B'wanga* is one of those pseudo-African novelties the swing bands love to play around with now and then, and is, truth to tell, quite an ingenious and amusing piece of business. First performed by Ambrose on an English recording, Kemp does a surprisingly vigorous and exciting job on it and almost convinces us that he would prefer this sort of thing to the flum-te-tiddle nonsense that he mostly occupies himself with. *Pursuin' the Blues* is of less interest, but at least is free from the sobbing vocals that poison his strictly commercial recordings.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*My Melancholy Baby*, and *I Cried for You*. Teddy Wilson and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7729.

Wilson is in fine fettle on these recordings, running out his customarily adroit and skillful pianistics with all his incomparable artistry. *My Melancholy Baby* is graced by an uncommonly appealing vocal by Ella Fitzgerald and both sides are sufficiently earthy to be of the purest type of hot playing, yet they are exceptionally easy to listen to, by virtue of the high level of the performances.

### SWING MUSIC NOTES

(Continued from Page 188)

From England comes the news that the Vocalion all swing releases continue to gain in popularity—and number. The latest disc to cause a sensation is Benny Carter's recording of a hot waltz! (Vocalion No. 19). And the surprising thing about it is that a rigid three-quarter time is held throughout—by the rhythm section. The personnel of the small band used in this recording of *Waltzing the Blues* is:

Benny Carter—tenor, alto, and trumpet.  
Gene Rodgers—piano.  
Bernard Addison—guitar.  
C. Kilceer—drums.  
Wally Morris—bass.

A swing waltz is not exactly news to America—especially now that the new Astaire-Rogers picture *Swing Time* is released and one of its tunes *A Waltz in Swing Time* is such a hit. But good as *Waltz in Swing Time* is, its swing is not exactly terrific nor is it hot. Benny Carter's record will be worth hearing.

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